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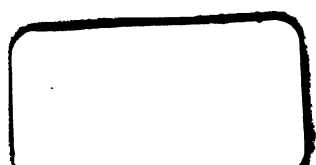






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# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

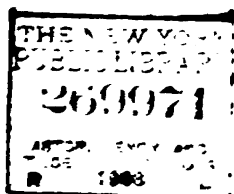


A POPULAR JOURNAL  
OF GENERAL LITERATURE,  
SCIENCE, AND POLITICS



VOL. LXX.—JULY TO DECEMBER, 1902

PHILADELPHIA  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY  
1902



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# ON THE ROAD TO ARCADY

BY

MABEL NELSON THURSTON



PHILADELPHIA  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY  
1902

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# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

JULY, 1902



## ON THE ROAD TO ARCADY

BY MABEL NELSON THURSTON

WASHINGTON, February 26.

THE magic is abroad to-day. Always while the calendar yet proclaims winter there are a few rare hours when February gets into one, when you feel it throbbing in your finger-tips and tingling in your toes and racing all over you in delicious thrills; when straightway you forget your years and stated habits and the dismay of your first gray hairs and are a-tiptoe for adventure, knowing that youth and beauty are eternal. Such hours brim with intoxicating revelations. One has sudden comprehension of the eagerness of the peach-tips when they begin to flush against the sky, and the impulse that stirs the crocuses bumping their yellow heads against the frozen ground in their impatience to be out. What a passion of joy must be theirs, daring the winter stars and shivery air, the first to carry the glad message to the poor and heavy-eyed!

It sounds extravagant, but I am extravagant to-day. Yesterday Aunt Mattie left. I didn't put those sentences together—they just tumbled out so; I'm glad there's nobody to see and misunderstand. Through nine months of the year I love my relatives devotedly, and am pathetically grateful to those who are willing to come and share my big, still house. All through the winter it has been so cosy and comfortable to come in from the sharp, shining cold or buffeting winds and find Aunt Mattie, plump and placid, knitting away before the fire. (It is appalling to think through what miles of glorious sunshine and blue sky she has serenely knitted!) It was perfect until three days ago, when nature distilled six drops of elixir of spring into the air. Then all the gypsy in me sprang up hot and panting. To think of knitting—knitting—knitting through the endless mystery and adven-

ture of the spring! It was enough to set one wild. Not that *I* should knit. I don't know how,—I never *mean* to know how,—but to be patted and cuddled and smoothed down into a proper fireside ornament when the winds were calling outside and the trees singing together—

And then a letter came summoning her home. I was repentant at first—I think it lasted for as much as half an hour; but I've noticed before the awful change that comes over my conscience in the spring. Winters I walk soberly, as befitting my Puritan ancestry, but when spring comes over the hill I always turn pagan, with Dryads and Naiads and all the sweet, wayward, irresponsible band of them for comrades; I am not even shocked when I hear down the wind the pipes of the great god Pan.

So I helped Aunt Mattie pack and told her (save the mark!) how sorry I was that she had to go so soon, and that she surely must come to me the very first day of next December (that, at least, was honest), and after I had seen her off I came home and hugged all the trees down the driveway. I think that Aunt Dilly saw me; I know that little Mrs. Bassett next door was laughing at her window. But I didn't care—spring was in *me*!

That evening Roger came up to condole. He knew I'd be lonesome, he said. Then he laughed. Now it is one thing to be exultant because you have sped the parting guest; it is quite another to have a cousin—a mere stripling of thirty-two at that—pretend to a knowledge of your emotions—uninvited! The fact that he belongs to the Survey and wears a whole alphabet after his name has nothing to do with the case. There are territories over which the Survey has no jurisdiction.

I told him gravely that it was dismally still and the house seemed as empty as a deserted chrysalis. He didn't seem impressed.

"Did you hug *all* the trees?" he asked.

"No," I returned hotly, "and if I did, I don't know what that has to do with it. I'm so delighted that Aunt Mattie has promised to come back next winter."

He smiled. It was a superior smile and entirely uncalled for. However, Roger isn't very often disagreeable; honesty—a small remnant of which defies even the degenerating influences of the spring—compels the confession. We made up before he left.

This morning I woke with the world—a still, gray waking, with the consciousness of a miracle at the door. Then I realized it was February, and spring was just across the way, and I was free for unnumbered and untellable wanderings exempt from the critical eyes of those to whom fate has committed the thankless duty—which they always heroically perform—of oversight of my ways. And as if that were not enough, the air was ringing with the whistle of a Carolina wren. It has been months since I've heard it, and its splendid volume summoned

the old amazement. I never lose the wonder of following that lusty call down to the mite of a bird at the end of it; it prophesies something as big as a red-head at least.

This morning it sounded a perfect pæan of triumph, as if the tiny whistler proclaimed himself the first discoverer of spring. It wasn't strange if he thought so, for we are in the midst of one of our alluring and treacherous February spring-tides. I scarcely could stop for breakfast, so irresistibly did the day call. This—*winter!* It might have been a fragment of some lost language, so empty of all dread did it fall upon the heart. There was no white breath anywhere; the whole earth lay quick—responsive to the sun; dreams of color haunted every bush, and the south wind was a courier of happy tidings, and no one was too poor or mean to have his word.

So I spent the day a-calling, and even I, who thought I knew, was astonished at the number of folk I found at home. There is an old slanting row of silver maples not far from the house, a fragment of some forgotten boundary. This morning I found them wide awake, their soft brown blossoms brushing the sky. They will go to sleep again—they always turn over and take a disgracefully long nap to make up for their early rising, standing finally bare and brown and unashamed in the midst of a green April sisterhood. But one forgives them for the gladness of that first message. To-day, however, a dozen eager things disputed the honor with them: The maples were thrusting out tiny yellow fingers, and down at the circles the pansies were laughing as if it were May-time; there were a few crocuses too, and I saw one clumpy pink hyacinth huddled up in a south corner, while up Highland Terrace the forsythia was creeping to bloom—already a golden star gleamed here and there in the brown tangle of its branches. It was spring, spring, *spring!* It will not last, of course; we shall pay for this. But hope will be easy now that she has been here; she cannot deny her own sweet word.

I came in long past lunch-time, radiant and dishevelled. The day had bred joyous superstition; each step had been so much happier than the last that one was ready for any miracle. I shouldn't have been surprised to find a violet or hear a thrush a-singing. And there were days of such delight before me—days and days of crowded solitude! How it fell to one poor mortal to be so favored of the gods I would not question, nor would I treat my joy delicately, lest it escape—I would accost it boldly as a hardy comrade and so beguile it into staying. Then I woke to the realization of a letter lying beside my plate. I wondered why it came just now, when human beings were at a discount, and even, for a moment, dallied with the temptation to put it aside till some more convenient time, but rejected that as unworthy the day. One could not be discourteous to a demand upon one's hospi-

tality even though the claimant be but a letter—or a beggar. That was what it probably was—I've noticed that philanthropy even takes a new lease of life in the spring. Perhaps it is heavenly wisdom; he who, fresh from the joy of the hills, could resist a plea for tired working girls or the old, weakened babies of the slums must recklessly dare the balances of justice.

A second glance destroyed my illusions: that large and very black chirography, which a casual view declared as clear as print and a more intimate acquaintance revealed full of baffling and elusive curves, never belonged to any overworked charity secretary. Just as inevitably it does belong to my cousin, Ethelwyn Dill. Once a year, at the season when people pay the penalty of all the Christmas gifts they've received, I am always the recipient of a note in the same writing. The paper is as changeable as Paris fashions. I infer from this latest communication that a deep ultramarine will be the prevailing shade for the next few months. I suppose it is one of the notions in which my solitude indulges me (Roger doesn't state it so badly, but his meaning is not to be evaded) that makes me class highly colored stationery in the same category with cologne. I am morally certain that I never could love anybody who wrote upon deep blue paper or indulged in Jocky Club.

I could almost pity myself when I remember how unsuspectingly I opened that offending envelope. Ethelwyn's stationery was pale as moonlight compared with the sensations I received from the contents—they were all colors of the rainbow. I seemed to hear the sentences exploding all about me, and at every explosion one more of my lovely solitary, spring-tide dreams was shocked from its hiding-place and floated away like thistledown up to the treetops, to the hilltops, to the stars. And I——

And the letter was so blithely unconcerned! It had all the assurance of spring-tide itself. I have saved it; I have a feeling that it may be wholesome reading for me.

"MY DEAR COUSIN PERSIS: I think I'd better say right in the beginning that this will probably be the strangest letter you ever received. I don't know what Daddy will say to me when I tell him what I have done, but as I sha'n't tell him till the letter is on its way it will be too late for him to say anything very effective. Besides, Daddy is such a dear, and knows how to yield so beautifully, I'm not a bit afraid of him. It's you that I'm afraid of,—just a little,—and yet it's to you that I'm making the most audacious proposal of my whole life.

"I suppose that I could hint, but I'd rather say it right out. Cousin Persis, I would so like to make you a visit! There—I held my breath and shut my eyes, which is the reason that line is so crooked—but I've said it. I've never been to Washington in my life, you know. Daddy has promised a hundred

times to take me, but there's one thing that has more influence with him than I have, and that is his old business. I'm so glad that girls don't have to have business. At least, some of them do, and it's splendid of them, and I admire them awfully, but I never could.

"But to go back to Daddy and business: I know that if I wait for him I'll be gray-haired and deaf and everything I eat will disagree with me, and I'll have to live on hot water and tablets, like old Mrs. Beedy. I don't know whether you remember Mrs. Beedy, it's so long since you've been here. It doesn't make any difference—you know the kind.

"Now, Cousin Persis, if I've been too bold, just tell me so, and it will be a splendid lesson for me, and I'll never ask anybody to invite me anywhere again as long as I live. But if I *could* come, you know if you didn't like me you could send me right back. How would it do—if you consider it at all, of course, I mean—for me to come three days on approval, the way they send books and ice-cream freezers and things? I'd tell you about myself beforehand if I knew what to tell. I'm not so red-headed as I used to be; I think maybe I'm not quite so red-headed *inside* either. It worried Daddy so that I really tried hard. But I'm afraid that I'm not very proper. I mean that I like to sit on the floor and go without gloves, and things like that. But, of course, if you didn't like it I'd try to remember about chairs. I know that I'd have a perfectly lovely time—I always do everywhere. It's you that I'm anxious about—if you should let me come. However, I couldn't bother you *very* much in three days—do you think so? In three days, when I was trying all the time to be good?

"There, I'm not going to chatter any more. I shall feel sort of—well, queer and excited—the way you do when you send a story to an editor (I did it once, so I know—that's one of the things I don't do any more)—till I hear from you. And I'm going to send this out to be mailed the moment I finish it, because I know if I kept it I should not have the courage to. But this I want to say last of all because it is the most important—it won't make the *least* difference if you don't want me to come. I mean, I'll be sorry, of course, but I shall know that I had no business to ask, and so, maybe, my conscience will feel better than if you let me come.

"Very lovingly, your little cousin,

"ETHELWYN DILL."

That's the letter. *What am I going to do about it?*

FEBRUARY 27.

I dreamt of Ethelwyn a dozen times last night. *Must* I tell her that she can come? If she were anyone but Cousin Tom's daughter—

LATER.

I have an inspiration—I'll invite her to come—next winter! She'll enjoy Washington twice as much when Congress is in session—Congress



and the Cabinet ladies! As if she could know the best time to come half as well as I know for her!

FEBRUARY 28.

I gave up, of course—I always do. I've written my answer and given it to Peter to mail in the nearest letter-box. I knew that that was the only way to do if I were going to be properly loyal to my family; if I had waited twelve hours longer I should have conjured up difficulties enough to keep a whole regiment away, to say nothing of one small cousin. I suppose that Providence is administering a dose of much-needed discipline—at least, Roger implied so when I told him to-night, and Roger's natural powers of judgment are intensified in this instance by the inestimable advantage of a twenty-years' acquaintance with his cousin. I had hoped that he might disapprove, in which case I could so easily have persuaded myself that I couldn't have a stranger coming in and destroying my poor boy's one corner of comfort. As a matter of fact, I have to acknowledge that the poor boy seems to get fully his share of joy out of the world in spite of the disadvantage of living in a boarding-house. But then he isn't there much,—he's off on expeditions continually,—and when he *is* he's generally up here! Heavens, what a wind!—

Peter came in just then, his face as blue as is compatible with its ebony finish and his teeth chattering with dismay.

"'Deed, Miss Persis, dis yere's one o' dem blizzards an' no mistake," he assured me. I ran to the window and looked out; thin, stinging lines of sleet were curling around the corner like whip-lashes, and there was a drift already several inches deep on the piazza. Not a thing to be seen, as the light streamed out, except a white, whirling chaos. One felt as if one were the first soul called up in the Judgment! If I had had any idea of this I should have gone over to Mrs. Bassett's, but it is too late now. A thought will keep coming to me: suppose that my letter to Ethelwyn should get lost and I have to write another! All sorts of things happen in blizzard confusions—if, of course, it *is* a blizzard. It may be clear and shining to-morrow—only—oh, the poor little blossoms that were so happy this morning!

MARCH 3.

It was a blizzard unmistakably. For forty-eight hours we saw nothing but the white, shifting walls till one's head fairly swam with the sight—as if the whole world—the whole universe—were snowing and blowing away. Besides, we were caught without coal enough, so that I have been taking my meals in the library and sleeping on a couch there; it and the kitchen are the only habitable spots in this great barn of a house. Our menu has been somewhat peculiar too. I never realized before how many things it is possible to get out of in two days in a fairly well-regulated house. Fortunately, we have chickens; but

I saw one of the poor creatures when Peter brought it in, and the agony of its frozen attitude has haunted me ever since. Milk we eat by the square inch; butter is lasting gloriously, for the simple reason that when we attempt to use any it evinces such a lively disposition to explore the room—once even landing on the top of the clock—that I decided to give up the luxury till balmier days. I tried to cut some apples for apple-dumplings yesterday when I didn't know what to do with myself, and I had to run and thaw out my fingers between every few slices. If scientists but realized the refrigerative power of apples under certain conditions we might seriously threaten the ice-trust. I might as well say it out—these two days have been interminable. One would think that I could have read, but I couldn't; this sullen roar of the wind numbs all one's senses. I feel all battered and sore with the strain of it; and, besides that, I always fancy that books are human enough to resent being made a convenience of; they sulk and refuse to talk, and display a rudeness of which they are utterly incapable at any other time. To see them at their best—winning and charming and utterly irresistible—one has to read when one should be doing something else. That is a flattery they cannot resist.

### THREE O'CLOCK.

It has stopped snowing! The wind is galloping over the roofs as wildly as ever, but the snow has stopped, and even for five minutes a thin, pinky sun peered out. Mrs. Bassett came to her window and waved a red-flannel skirt at me; I knew that it was her revolt against the white sea that swept between us, swallowing the hedge as if it were no more than a fringe of grasses, and I snatched up a Roman blanket and executed a war-dance on my side. It seemed so blessed to see a human face! Peter and Dilly didn't count; they have been so frightened and shrivelled in the cold that they were *not* human. I raised my window a crack to get news of the world—the one window that had been spared by the storm. Through the heavy, surf-like roar came fine, sharp voices of distress, and the air suddenly seemed full of tiny brown bodies. I knew that it was weak of me: I hate English sparrows and I never shall have a better chance to coöperate with nature in lessening the pest; but somehow I couldn't think of them as sparrows this afternoon—only as tiny, pitiful comrades in distress. Besides, there were some snow-birds in the flock, and I had to save the snow-birds at any cost. I wrapped the afghan about me and ran through the kitchen, snatching up a loaf of bread from the table as I passed. When I got out on the porch I saw a little, old figure on the next porch similarly employed.

"*Now*, where's your consistency?" I called to her. I could see her small face wrinkle with laughter, and her voice blew across to me in gusts:

"I guess it's all snowed under. Anyway, there's a bluebird."

"Yes," I returned, "it's the snow-birds I'm feeding."

Seated before the library fire after dark I find the world has suddenly grown warm and friendly again; whether it was the cheery glimpse of my little neighbor or the bird gratitude that one likes to fancy (which will be shown in a couple of months by all the sparrows in the neighborhood locating in my ivy), I feel in touch once more. There is even an extra glow of complaisance because I happen to have given the last loaf of bread to the birds, and have in consequence gone breadless at supper: it is so easy to claim a fictitious nobleness for it—to pretend that I did it of gracious intent! I am sure that I enjoyed my supper far more than if the bread had been in me instead of in the sp—snow-birds.

Now that I am able to look at the storm from even an hour's perspective, it reveals a sudden charm. If I had had anyone to share the experience with, it might easily have been a pure joy full of fascinating plays at exploration and heroism. Is Providence trying to reconcile me to Ethelwyn? At any rate, I am going to get out in that snow to-morrow.

MARCH 4.

Such a day it has been! This morning Mr. Bassett cut a path through between the houses and Mrs. Bassett came over and paid me a visit, which I returned with diplomatic courtesy ten minutes after she left. The snow has drifted much more than we realized; in some places it is but a few inches deep, but over by the hedge we have a veritable tunnel. From Mrs. Bassett's windows I have a view of my house all bearded with ragged, milky icicles, some of them a yard long. The wind is still blowing and the surface of the snow is scarred into ridges. Hours of undimmed sun have only availed to thaw little silver spots on the white plain; the whole hillside is a shining sheet of silver, but the level stretches are all streaked and splashed with shadows, the hollows deep purple and the roads purple gray. The sharp contrasts of light and dark make the woods seem rushing upon one; they look so shabbily thin and poor and bare against this pitiless white background.

About ten o'clock Roger came in. He was just about used up; the roads out here are all unbroken, of course, and he had had to plough his way through a mile of drifts, for not even the upper end of the car-line was yet dug out. I gave him a sumptuous repast of corn-bread and canned peaches. As soon as he got thawed out he began to scold me.

"What for—the blizzard?" I asked. "I'm enjoying it, but I really wasn't responsible."

"It's no subject for joking, Persis—you might have been frozen

to death here with nobody within call." Roger is very tired and very cross when he gets as commonplace as this.

"But that wasn't possible," I assured him cheerfully. "I have Peter and Dilly; and, moreover, there are the Bassetts—I can go there at any time."

"Yes, and suppose that you were taken ill? I suppose you would get up and go over there in a blizzard!"

"It might cure me," I suggested heartlessly; "and, anyway,"—with the charming inconsequence that is so pleasing to mankind intent upon argument,—"I didn't, you see—I've just been having a good time; and there won't be another blizzard this year, and besides all that, Ethelwyn is coming, so I won't be all alone any more."

"As if a three-weeks' visit counted! You ought to have someone with you all the time. You need it, Persis."

"So I understood you to say. How do you know that Ethelwyn and I won't take such a fancy to each other that we shall refuse ever to be parted again?"

He shrugged his shoulders. "I suppose that you will please yourself," he answered stiffly.

After a while, however, the warmth began to penetrate and he grew more human, and before he left he was quite himself again, only saying, as he put on his overcoat, that he supposed I would be safe enough now through the rest of the year, but next winter things should be different. I thought if the little delusion made him any happier, he was welcome to it; there are ten months before next winter—ten months of untroubled hermitage-life; to become excited over the question now would be as foolish as for a buttercup to worry over next year's weather possibilities.

It was after four when he left, and for the next hour I sat glued to the window watching the sunset pageant. At one time the whole hilltop was like a rose; then the light faded and the shadows stormed it and it changed into a blue sea with a golden path to the sun; then the golden path too vanished, and it was all harsh and cold and gray. Only down on the edge of the darkness the city lay in a rim of golden lights. The wind has gone down at last and it is so utterly still! There is something almost terrible in the silence falling upon four days of tumult. It is as if everything in the world were dead.

MARCH 5.

Dilly is sick. I hope, though, it will be nothing serious. I really think she was just frightened into it by the cold.

MARCH 6.

Dilly is worse. I have been with her all day. Mrs. Bassett wanted to divide the care, but I wouldn't let her—Dilly has petted me all my

life. I should feel small indeed if I deserted my old friend now. But if *only* we could get a doctor out here!

SIX O'CLOCK.

The doctor at last. He says that it is a severe attack of inflammatory rheumatism—that probably Dilly will never be able to do anything again. Poor old soul! she is so worried at my nursing her. She has sent Peter for a niece, Minerva Carter, who, she declares, can do everything. I suppose I may as well reconcile myself to a stranger first as last—it evidently has to come. One thing, if Minerva should prove to be—what one cannot help foreseeing—a parody upon her name, I shall have the best of excuses for postponing Ethelwyn's visit. The more I think of it the more sure I am that this is the door of escape. Moreover, if Minerva should, by any unheard-of chance, prove to be the paragon that Dilly paints her, then I shall be sure that the balance of nature will be restored by Ethelwyn. No one, not even a favorite of fortune, could dare dream of such felicity as the addition to one's household of a goddess of wisdom *and* a companionable young cousin. I have a suspicion that that line has proved traitor to me. I am reckless to-night, and, besides, Roger will never see this. I *have* been lonely sometimes. The more I have loved the haunting, aching beauty of the spring-time the more I've longed for somebody to love it with me. Mrs. Bassett is perfect, but she has a house to keep, and her house includes a husband, so that evenings and late afternoons and meal-times—the very times, in short, when I invariably most want to enjoy the mood of the day, she is almost always busy. A little, red-haired girl who *loved* these things—I have not dared let myself think what of joy that might portend. Meantime, I thank my happy fortune that Roger is away on some geological business or other and doesn't know of Dilly's illness. He might moralize.

MARCH 7.

Minerva Carter has come. I tremble to write it (I am "hitting wood" industriously with my left hand), but

"She's all my fancy painted her—  
She's lovely, she's divine."

A great, gaunt giantess, as black as the bottom of my ink-bottle, with arms like flails and a subterranean voice, but wearing an air of strength and competency as bracing as a west wind. In ten minutes I had fallen weakly back into my properly subordinate place, and Minerva was "swinging" the whole household. Peter goes about enveloped in a perpetual grin; as for poor old Dilly, it is pathetic to see her relief. Blessings upon Minerva, even although she destroys my last hope of a spring-tide Ethelwyn.

MARCH 12.

A letter from Ethelwyn to-day, and she's coming Friday. Friday—that at least is fitting! *She* is as gay as a tulip, but the moment that Peter appeared at the door with that square of ultramarine in his hand a terrible foreboding fell upon me. And I wasn't mistaken. If it were only for three days or three weeks! But Ethelwyn mentions incidentally, as carelessly as if it were of no more importance than the loss of an old glove, that Cousin Tom will probably have to go abroad for three or four months on business; she doesn't *say* anything, but she has the blindest confidence in a generous and genial Providence burdened with no weightier or more disagreeable duty than arranging pleasures for young women of twenty-one. *Three or four months!* Why, that means all the spring-time and June! It means that I shall have to spend the magic hours of the year tramping asphalt pavements and climbing endless stairs and going to all points of the compass to stare at houses where people lived whom we're supposed to know about and don't, while out on the hills the dogwood will whiten and the new leaves come in a thousand ways of beauty, and the birds make their wonderful uncharted journey, and the winds go singing—singing—oh, how can I lose it all! Those brief purple days of hepatica—the white hours when the bloodroot lives its exquisite life—the April evenings when the trees on the hillside stand shoulder deep in shadow, their bright heads shining in the last light—the early May evenings, pink and fragrant as an apple-blossom—all these lost out of my life forever—all for a red-headed girl! And there's no knowing what else it means, either. You never can tell what red hair means! I will try to think it all out—it might as well be faced first as last.

She will undoubtedly be very modern and progressive—young people of twenty-one always are; I've no doubt that I was myself at twenty-one. She will probably view my habits of washing the silver at the table and cutting loaf sugar and twisting lamp-lighters (when I'm in the mood), and a score of other old-fashioned practices, as curious discoveries from—oh, say the Middle Ages! Probably she writes—to be sure, she spoke of that stage as past, but she may be planning a novel in secret,—they generally are,—in which case I shall undoubtedly figure as the interesting faded and genteel spinster. Perhaps she will be kind enough to supply me with a past history. That, at least, would be interesting. Or it may be that she doesn't care for books, in which case what shall I do with my dear, old, brown comrades in the library? I've always been so jealous for them, and let no one into the room who would disturb their gentle company. Once in a while, to be sure, an intruder slips by me. There was a girl the other day (I think she must have been twenty-one) who evaded my intention and landed, bewildered, in the dear, old, shabby room, and feeling that something

was demanded of her by the gazing ranks, asked me if I didn't think Shakespeare was "nice." I wonder if Ethelwyn thinks Shakespeare nice! I wonder——

I was interrupted by Mrs. Bassett, who came shivering into the room on the edge of the bitter wind like a tiny dry leaf, her little, old face full of laughter. I've wondered sometimes how old she is; I know how young—she is born anew with every day. She possesses the finest genius in the world—that of living joyously; lover of her kind though she is, she is yet her own most intimate comrade, and life is never dull to her, for she herself creates events.

She settled down into her favorite chair—she has one in every room in the house—and told me of her latest experience, which concerned a certain popular idol who has just tumbled from his pedestal, and by his fall uncomfortably jostled the emotions of the public. I knew that Mrs. Bassett, who is a born hero-worshipper, had his picture tacked up in her little sewing-room, and I had been curious to know what she would do with it.

"Yes," she said, smiling radiantly across at me, "I wouldn't give in for a long time. I've found it doesn't do to believe newspapers too soon. Seems sometimes as if there's one thing people like better than stickin' folks up on pinnacles, and that's pullin' 'em down. And come to, like as not 'twas all jest a newspaper story, anyhow, so I waited. But when all the papers fell into line I began to think the time had come to up and do something, so when father came home last night I said to him, 'Father, you jest take that picture down from the sitting-room door, will you, please?' so father, he took it down and brought it to me. I was jest gettin' supper; I'd been frying doughnuts and the fat had splattered a little mite. That give me my opportunity. I *jest scrumpled up that picture and blacked the stove with it!* It came into my mind all in a flash that that would relieve my feelings. It did too—I felt real refreshed after I'd done it. Father, he stood and laughed at me, but I didn't care for that. Women are made different from men—that's what 'tis: now that we don't believe in witches no more, I dunno but I approve of stickin' pins in dolls—'twould save a whole lot of feelings from turning round an' stickin' into you!"

I am impressed with her resolution—it seems as if it ought to work in the case of Ethelwyn—only I can't quite make the application. There is a stiffness of temper about a cabinet photograph that unfits it for the ideal stove-polisher. Besides, I am ashamed of my weakness, but I might as well confess that such heroic measures are beyond me. I'd defy anyone to clean a stove with a portrait of Ethelwyn!

Three days more of freedom—*only three days!* I want to walk and walk! I'd like to lose my way over the hills and not come home till June! And by an irony of fate, the whole world is thawing and

running off in streams of snow-water, and I challenge anyone to go slopping down slushy roads through an air penetrated with snow-chill and not find his out-of-door enthusiasm hanging a little limply from the experience. Probably as soon as Ethelwyn comes the world will drain off and blossom like a hyacinth. And I shall be spending the priceless days seeing them stamp bank-notes at the Bureau or gazing at the macerator in the Treasury!

MARCH 14.

To-morrow!

MARCH 15.

In half an hour I start down to the station to meet Ethelwyn.

MARCH 16.

Ethelwyn came last night. It was a Cæsarean experience. She came and saw and conquered—every one, from Minerva down to me. I think that she did it from mere force of habit. Apparently, from bits that leak out, her whole journey was in the nature of a triumphal progress. By careful calculation I find that it required the services of seven young men to get the flowers and candies with which she was laden safely on the train. Half an hour after she had started she fell in with a former school-mate and her brother (it is a curious fact, and one whose law I have not yet been able to discover, that all Ethelwyn's friends and acquaintances are possessed of interesting brothers or cousins), who relieved her of all care as far as Wilmington, and by the time that they left the porter and conductor had become her abject slaves. Of course, Ethelwyn has not explained things exactly this way; I am merely acting upon the inevitable suggestion of the course of events since her arrival. As I said, everybody here surrendered at once, and Ethelwyn is charmed with everything and everybody. Until I saw how delighted she was with the old house and its belongings I never realized the deprivations of those who have spent their lives in little new, crude manufacturing towns. Ethelwyn goes about touching the ancient chairs with small, endearing caresses; she spends hours searching into the gloom of the old portraits in the north parlor; she is full of wonder over the sugar scissors and plate warmers; she thinks Peter and Aunt Dilly the oddest people she ever saw and Minerva a splendid old dear, and Mrs. Bassett the "most fascinating little fairy witch" in all the universe. I wonder sometimes where in this venerable world she places me; I have no doubt that I rank as one of the gray-haired sisters.

We had a long talk this morning. Of course, there was no question but that she was to stay with me till Cousin Tom returned from Europe, so it was best to have the situation declared at once. Ethelwyn herself opened the way. She was standing at the window looking



down the road. I live in dread of the time when the city shall reach one of its long arms out here. It hasn't yet; there is Mrs. Bassett's tiny little cottage with the poplars whispering at its windows, but beyond that no winter neighbors; in the summer, when the trees spread their green tents, there are so many—if one sees them!

"It is *very* quiet here," Ethelwyn remarked thoughtfully.

It couldn't have happened better, and I seized the advantage without a moment's delay. I impressed upon her young mind that it *was* quiet here—that it had been the arduous labor of a large portion of my lifetime to make it so, and that at last people understood and respected my eccentricities. For nine months of the year guests were welcome to all that I could give, but for the other three, from the middle of March to the middle of June, I was at home only to the hills.

"I hope you won't mind, Ethelwyn," I finished. "I gave you fair warning, you know."

Ethelwyn drew a long sigh of bliss.

"Oh Cousin Persis," she cried, "I think that's just the *sweetest* thing! I *adore* quiet. And there isn't any at home, you know. Somehow or other people are always coming—they never *will* understand that I like to be alone. I don't know what it is—maybe it's the air—or the mosquitoes. Yes, I think that's it—the mosquitoes! They make people restless. It's so much more endurable to get up and go somewhere than to sit still and let them devour you wholesale! And you have no mosquitoes here, you say? And no callers? Oh Cousin Persis, it's the loveliest place I ever heard of in my life—it's—it's just the Forest of Arden—that's what 'tis. I'm going to date all my letters from the Forest of Arden."

I looked at her firmly.

"If I remember rightly, Ethelwyn, things happened in the Forest of Arden, and——"

She interrupted me a trifle hastily. "But this," she said, "shall be a forest where nothing happens!—only birds, you know, and hills and sunsets and things like that. Oh, nothing else at all forever and ever!"

APRIL 5.

It is three weeks since Ethelwyn came. I have to acknowledge that things have not happened exactly as I planned, but Ethelwyn has so clearly pointed out to me that it is not her fault at all—that, indeed, she seems to be the innocent victim of some persistent fate, that any haunting suspicions that I may have always merge into sympathetic commiseration. It was the night after our talk that Mr. Hawkins called. He was a neighbor up in Medway, and happening to be in Washington, felt in duty bound to call in order to report to Cousin Tom. I could but acknowledge the entire reasonableness of this when Ethel-

wyn explained it to me. And since he was to be here but a few days, and Washington was indulging in one of its spring blows, so that it was not gypsy weather, I had no reasonable ground of complaint.

But before he retired to his native haunts he asked permission to bring up a friend of his—a Mr. Smith. Now, it seems to me that just there Ethelwyn was a trifle weak. Mr. Smith lives in Washington. She might have foreseen results, though she assures me most solemnly that she couldn't possibly have imagined them—how could she? And then a little grieved droop creeps about the corner of her mouth, and "If I'm going to bother you, Cousin Persis, and spoil all your lovely spring-time, I'd better go home right away."

Naturally, that always reduces me to submission. One doesn't care to pose as an ogre, especially with a bit of coaxing pink-and-white-and red girlhood. I know that I am being wheedled; I can see it in Mrs. Bassett's eyes and Minerva's and Roger's, but I just go right on—and so does Ethelwyn. I am a bit revenged that Roger's attitude piques her. He watches her with the patronizing amusement of a big dog towards a young and frolicsome puppy. She seems so much younger—I can see—to him than to me. I wonder if there is ever a happy woman who does not, at times, when nobody is watching, slip away to her securest place of treasures and try on her outgrown girlhood, and smile to see how well she still can wear it! There have been days and days when I could be as joyously inconsequent as Ethelwyn—only, of course, I never let anybody guess it; people would say that I was trying to keep young. Trying! As if, if one's heart is gray and wrinkled, the wisest skill could avail to hide it! If one isn't young without any trying, all the effort in the world will never bring one a single step nearer to the desirable goal. Youth is a gift, not an attainment. More people than we realize are born old and stay old forever after.

Ethelwyn, upon the other hand, was born young; she will be just as young at eighty, if she knows the world so long, as she is at twenty-one. I could shake Roger for not understanding this, yet at the same time I am amused at Ethelwyn's resentment. Somehow, to be looked upon as a pretty and promising child does not appeal to her in the least. She retaliates by always addressing him as "Mr. Roger," which calls up an inevitable vision of gray hair and spectacles and slippers, and never fails to make him squirm inwardly.

Aside from the interruptions of Mr. Hawkins, which are ended, and those of Mr. Smith, which I fear are not, the weeks have been full of pleasure. We have been doing sight-seeing—some, but not too much. It's a delight even to go sight-seeing with Ethelwyn (an opinion which I share with Mr. Smith), she has such impetuous, wren-like bursts of enthusiasm over such unexpected things. This was particularly notice-

able at the Capitol, where she showed a depth of interest in the bronze doors for which I was at an utter loss to account till I discovered that she was taking elaborate notes of Queen Isabella's dress with an eye to future creations of her own. But the Capitol disclosed joys at every step; the Supreme Court room met her approval because the red must make such a pretty background for visitors, and the reception-rooms because they had such lovely mirrors. She stood lost in thought before the picture of the "Marriage of Pocahontas." She climbed with unalloyed delight into the Speaker's chair in the House. I think, for one intoxicating moment, she had a vision of herself with all the honorable members asking permission to call! She experimented with every one of the whispering stones, holding long conversations with the guide, who apparently enjoyed it even more than she did; and when she came home she hugged me and told me she had had a perfectly lovely time and learned ever and ever so much, and I was such a dear to take her round. When I suggested that in case she found upon investigation that her knowledge was not of the sort that would appeal particularly to Cousin Tom she would find a guide-book in one of the library drawers, she made a protesting face and said that I was a saucy old thing. But when Ethelwyn says "old" you always feel that it is merely a term of endearment and has no reference to age. I've heard her say it in precisely the same tone to a puppy of ten-days' standing in the world.

Yesterday we went down to Mount Vernon. It was the most exquisite April day, an opal day of shifting lights and colors—emerald, amethyst, rose, that always just eluded vision and yet haunted the sight as an old song haunts the memory. We went down on the new electrics (returning by boat), and Ethelwyn, full of exclamations, till we had passed Alexandria, grew more and more silent as we went deeper and deeper into the spring-time. When she turned towards me I saw something shining in her eyes. She did not try to disguise it.

"I—things get me so stirred up sometimes," she said. "I suppose you think I'm always frivolling. I can't seem to help it when I'm happy; but sometimes when you think of something splendid—like Washington, you know——"

I knew, and I loved the child for it. She looked up through the shining mist in her eyes. "The happiness gets too big and runs over," she explained.

I shall always think that it was a small thing for fate to shatter a mood like the one that we were both in when we stepped off the cars and confidently presented ourselves at the gate. I had a box of lunch and Ethelwyn one of candy. Ethelwyn passed through, of course,—Ethelwyn always passes through everywhere,—but the guard-dian of the turnstile stretched a prohibitive arm before me.

"No lunches are allowed to be eaten on the grounds," he said firmly.

I was filled with consternation; from childhood I had picnicked on the beautiful lawn overlooking the quiet river. I glanced despairingly at Ethelwyn, who grew stern with indignation.

"You didn't stop me," she cried, "and I had a box."

The gatekeeper grinned. "Candy passes in all right," he explained.

But Ethelwyn was not to be melted. "Well, I guess I'm not going in if my cousin can't!" she declared with spirit. "Will you please let me out—*immediately!*"

The gatekeeper started another smile which got petrified half way by Ethelwyn's freezing glance. Secretly I couldn't help sympathizing with him; it was as if a humming-bird tried to assume the dignity of a crow.

"Yes, Miss, certainly, Miss," he answered meekly. But I am morally certain that behind our remonstrant backs he indulged in wild hilarity.

Out on the boardwalk Ethelwyn and I looked at each other.

"There's only one way of outwitting him," she suggested delicately.

"But how can we?" I returned. "There are no trees that we can reach—everything's fenced off both sides of the track; and it's too hot in the sun. Of course, we could go in here." We stood outside the tiny restaurant experimentally. Then Ethelwyn made up a face.

"No, we couldn't!" she said decidedly. "It smells milky; and I know the dishes are an inch thick—you can tell by the sound! Just listen a moment."

I listened and was convinced. "But what can we do?" I asked helplessly. "We don't want to throw away Minerva's lunch—she took so much pains with it. Besides, we'll be hungry long before we get home."

"We're not going to throw it away," Ethelwyn replied firmly. "We are going to sit on the platform there by the station and eat it. There's nobody around but that man at the souvenir counter, and we'll get on the other side from him."

It seemed the only plan, so we adopted it unanimously. Our beautiful, high-minded mood was gone, but the day was good to us, and another, utterly different, but full of charm, fell upon us. We sat on the bench up against the end of the platform, shielded from observation of the souvenir man and the gatekeeper: the clatter of the dishes came to us so softened that Ethelwyn relented and acknowledged that possibly her former estimates had been excessive and she would take a quarter of an inch from them. We could no longer smell milk, and though the trees were shut from us, their April beauty could not be

prisoned; and a song-sparrow swinging on the tip of a young maple near by sang and sang.

So we ate our lunch, shook off the crumbs, and once more presented ourselves at the gate—this time with a far-away and disinterested manner, calculated to deceive the gatekeeper should he fancy that he ever had seen us before. He really behaved very well; we paid our tribute and stepped through the turnstile and into a hundred years ago.

For two hours we wandered there. Ethelwyn was in ecstasies—subdued, for the quiet of the place laid its spell upon us, but no less keen. But it was due to Ethelwyn that two of my dearly cherished illusions vanished, leaving a void which nothing can ever fill. It was Ethelwyn's fault entirely, because the guards would explain things to her; I've been there a score of times, and they have never shown any such concern for my enlightenment. Through the whole two hours they had all been so pleasant and gentlemanly that I never dreamt of danger when at last we stepped innocently into the library. Now, the library has always been a favorite with me, bare though it is, and I was wandering contentedly about, reading the titles of the poor, imprisoned books, doomed to spend their days unread behind the closed doors, when Ethelwyn's voice, full of irresistible pleading, came to me from the other side of the room:

"Oh, *couldn't* you show me one of the secret closets? I never saw a secret closet in my life. Where I come from they never have secret anythings. And I'm so longing to see one!"

The guard looked distressed. "I'm sorry, Miss, I'd like to oblige you. Lots of people have asked me about those closets, but I've been here five years and never discovered one and never found anybody that had. I reckon that the closets and the secret way down to the river were made up by the papers when——"

I grasped Ethelwyn's hand in terror. "Come," I commanded, "come this minute!"

Ethelwyn followed me breathlessly. "What is the matter?" she cried. "Are you sick, Cousin Persis? Do you want some salts? What is it?"

"I want something left!" I returned bitterly. "Ethelwyn Dill, don't you know that if you had let that man talk three minutes longer we should probably have learned that there never was any *Washington*?"

Ethelwyn looked at me earnestly, and her voice was very subdued.

"I—I didn't realize," she stammered penitently. "I get so interested when men are talking. I'm real glad that you called me away, Cousin Persis. Is there any place that we can go where there won't be any danger?"

"There's the garden," I replied, somewhat mollified. "We're not likely to meet anybody there, but if we do——"

"I'll not let him tell me a single, solitary thing!" Ethelwyn promised.

We went across the lawn to the sundial and then over to the garden. At the entrance Ethelwyn stopped and bought a souvenir spoon. I think that she already regretted her rash promise and took this way of consoling herself.

That beautiful old garden—with what gentle benediction its peace fell upon us! We wandered in and out the box-bordered ways, meeting in fancy at every turn men and women its paths had known a hundred years ago. Once Ethelwyn stopped.

"Didn't you hear them?" she asked.

"What?" I answered.

"The little children—the queer, prim, dear little children that played here a whole century ago. Think what the trees have seen, and these hedges, and——"

The inevitable voice—man's voice—interrupted us:

"Can I show you ladies anything about the garden?"

Ethelwyn looked up: her face, still flushed and tender with her fancies, was enough to make a man say anything.

"Oh, I'd love to hear——" she began; then she recollected herself. "I think we know all that we care to," she said coldly.

The new man seemed amused; they all have different ways of looking, though they mean the same thing.

"I've been gardener here for twenty-five years," he suggested with admirable gravity. "I thought that perhaps I could show you some of the oldest plants and tell you their history."

Ethelwyn looked pleadingly at me; I couldn't help it, I didn't mean to yield at all, but I heard a voice that I could not disown saying mildly:

"We should enjoy seeing them very much. We were afraid at first, because we have just suffered a cruel disappointment. One of the guards in the house dragged a dearly-beloved myth out into the sunlight,—one of those stories you've been brought up on, you know,—and painstakingly proved to us that there was nothing there. We felt as if we couldn't bear it to have anything like that happen here."

The gardener laughed as if he were pleased. "It won't happen with me," he promised confidently. "I can assure you, ladies, that you won't lose a single thing in here."

Accordingly, we threw our fears to the winds and surrendered ourselves to the delight of the hour, and the old garden, only dreaming of blossoms as yet, revealed to our happy eyes its wealth of story and

legend. Last of all we stopped beneath a tall, swaying rose-bush veiled in the misty green of its new leaves. It was under this bush, we learned, that Major Lewis told his love to Nellie Custis, after which the darkies, fancying it endowed with some sweet magic, claimed that one of its roses would make smooth the roughest path over which true love might seek a way with bleeding feet. And many and many was the timid lover to whom the sight of the rose or the story of its wondrous history gave a fine glow of courage, many the shy, longing couples that it had brought together. As we listened the scales fell from our eyes, and in the tall, middle-aged man before us we beheld but another merry masquerade of the little god of love.

"I'd give you one of the roses, Miss—ladies," he finished, "if they were in bloom now. There ain't a year that I don't give away hundreds, and there ain't a year that I don't get letters telling me what they've done. I'd like mighty well to give you one."

"Maybe a little, tiny spray of the leaves——" Ethelwyn suggested.

The gardener shook his head. "You can have it and welcome," he said, "but I don't believe it's worth anything. It's the roses that do it all. They're white roses and sweet, though they're not extra pretty." He was cutting as he spoke two tips from the new green sprays. We both thanked him, though I felt as embarrassed with mine as I should if somebody had presented me with one of the candy hearts that used to be considered the height of desirability in my childhood. But Ethelwyn was at no loss whatever. She discovered at the tip of her spray a tiny green bud.

"It's all there," she declared with satisfaction. "It doesn't make a bit of difference that it's all folded up and hammered down tight—it's there just the same."

She pinned the bit of green against her violet waist. Going back her mood was pensive; the reason came as we left the car and walked home through the late April afternoon.

"Did you notice," she questioned hesitatingly, "how several people—nice people, of course—looked at me when we got into town? I'm sure that the rose is working its charm."

I said that I had noticed nothing unusual. I hope that she didn't interpret it to mean that people always look at her. I don't want Ethelwyn spoiled.

APRIL 12.

We've given up sight-seeing, except what we can see from the windows—the splendid shaft of the monument, changing color with every changing light; the Soldiers' Home, at this distance a white marble dream in the midst of the exquisite rose and violet of the waking trees, and the old convent tower beyond the silver foldings of the

hills; spring is too wonderful—every hour that we have to take from it for the commonplace necessities of food and sleep we give with grudging protests, like a miser parting with his cherished gold. Misers of spring we truly are.

Yet though Ethelwyn loves it all, there is a large difference between us. For some days past I've observed upon her part a growing disposition to take it all seriously, which is distinctly rebuking to my ignorantly joyous hours. Finally, yesterday she announced her intention of spending the morning down-town.

I offered to go with her, but she told me that she couldn't be so selfish when both my eyes were full of arbutus and hepatica. Ethelwyn's figures of speech are sometimes slightly startling, but she seldom fails to comprehend one's mood. It was a morning when the hills were silver and the air full of sweet, fleeting breaths of perfume, and the birds were in ecstasy. Ethelwyn kissed me and ran for my old hat and jammed it down on my head and pushed me out the door.

"Go to your old hills!" she laughed. "The spell is upon you—you can't deny it. You'll wander till you're tired out and then come home shining—I know you! It's perfectly reprehensible, such absolute content in such profound ignorance. I asked you the difference between a beetle and a bug the other day, and you couldn't tell me. I, Miss Goldwin, am going on a search for wisdom."

"That's too long," I returned, "it's a life search—and then you don't find it. But joy is waiting on the doorstep this morning. You'd better come, Ethelwyn."

"Never!" she replied firmly. "It isn't often that I thirst for knowledge, but I do to-day, and I'm going to make the most of it. You might as well stop your beguilements—I am adamant. And, besides, you're wasting time—yours, I mean, not mine."

The last argument prevailed and I fled. Oh, what a day it was! For a week past great winds had been abroad again and every little growing thing stood still—it almost seemed as if they held their breath. Then at last the wind went away, and in a single night a green tide swept over the hills and dashed to the treetops in spray of rose and pink and white. And above it all, a sky deep and tender as June, with, hour after hour, great, white, shining sails moving slowly across it. *Something* must have been going on up there—some great review of heavenly squadrons. I couldn't keep my eyes from the wonderful pageant—that is, I couldn't until, in the humiliating fashion the flesh has of intruding upon our holiest hours, I was compelled to lower my gaze by a violent crick in my neck.

And after all I had been passing such a world of beauty below the sky! All the mystery of the new leaves (year after year I've laughed at the ignorance of the people who scour the country for azalea and



dogwood and Judas-tree blossoms, and never discover the wisdom of the beech-scrolls, nor the marvellous satin sheaths the hickories wear, nor that white-oak leaves, when they are babies, are as pink as arbutus), and the whispering of the spring-time voices, and the myriad delicate scents that blew up and down the air. *Scents!* I often think that noses might as well disappear from the human race for all the use that most people make of them. And nature has prepared such inexhaustible happiness for that humble organ. I've planned many a time to take my own nose on a holiday and leave eyes and ears at home, only, somehow, I always forget. Such is the effect of generations of ancestors who have recognized their noses only in times of severe affliction—such as a cold in the head, for instance!

So I walked on and on in deepening content. I cannot sing, but when I am happiest out-of-doors I always hum to myself—purring, Ethelwyn calls it. I purred all the morning and half of the afternoon before I even thought of going home. I knew that nobody would worry: Ethelwyn is well acquainted with my failings after living with me through four weeks of spring-time.

At five o'clock, tanned, wind-tossed, and generally dishevelled, I walked in upon Ethelwyn in daintiest afternoon gown, a thing of soft blue and feathery laces, as if she too had been looking at the sky; at least, I knew that if she had looked at the sky there would have been some such result of her observations sooner or later—Ethelwyn is nothing if not practical.

She was standing in front of one of the book-cases gazing at a row of oppressively new volumes. I crossed over and read the titles.

"How to Know the Wild Flowers," "How to Tell the Trees," "Ferns—Their Homes and their Haunts," "Birds of the United States," "How to Distinguish Mushrooms," "Our Common Butterflies," "Mosses for the People," "Our Insect Friends."

I remarked that she had omitted works upon geology and the stars. Ethelwyn frowned. "Probably you don't believe that I intend to study them," she replied, with her chin in the air.

I was gratified at the consideration with which she framed her sentence, and hastened to assure her that I did not doubt her intentions for the moment.

"But you think I won't carry them out, and that's just as unkind of you," she pursued, pinning me down.

"Why do you put such suggestions into my head?" I asked.

"You know you do," she replied, "and you can't deny it. And the worst of it is, I do too! I didn't realize till I got them home how many pages there were—I just kept going on and on thinking how nice it would be to have speaking acquaintances with all the out-door things, instead of having them meet you with a vacant stare because you can't

call them by name. But when the books came home and I stood them all up there they looked so dreadfully imposing! So then I counted up the pages: there are twenty-four hundred and seventy-two altogether; that would make, if I read them all the next four months, twenty pages a day, and then I forgot to leave out Sundays, and somehow there are so many things to do that twenty pages a day——”

“Twenty pages a *summer* day, Ethelwyn!”

“Yes,” she replied humbly, “I know it.”

The humility was so pretty that I hadn’t the heart to disturb it; but it was short-lived. She turned with sudden spirit.

“Anyway,” she remarked crushingly, “I know the difference between a bug and a beetle!”

I don’t know *where* they came from. I don’t mean birds or blossoms, I mean men! It occurred to me to count up, the other day, and although my suspicions had been growing alarmingly lately, I was full of consternation over the result. In the past three weeks we have had just four evenings without callers—masculine callers, I mean. Of course, half of this has been Mr. Smith, but I don’t know that that helps the matter any. Ethelwyn is greatly distressed. She declares that she cannot tell how it has happened. She does hope that she isn’t keeping “Mr. Roger” away. As a matter of fact, “Mr. Roger” in this new environment is developing unsuspected characteristics. It has been such a quiet old house for ten years past, I thought that he would like the brightness of young life in it once more. But to my surprise he pays no more attention to it than if the callers were so many sparrows chattering on the piazza. When he comes he immediately slips into his old corner in the library. I’ve scolded him and told him he’s too young to sit in corners, but it rolls off his conscience like raindrops.

“I’ve been old with you so long, Persis,” he declares teasingly, “I don’t know any other way.”

“Old with me!” I cry in scorn; “you’re old enough to be my grandfather. It’s *April*, Roger,—don’t you know it? As if anybody could be old in April!”

“But I’ve had so many Aprils—just as many as I’ve had Januarys. You never show any of these disquieting symptoms in January, Persis.”

“Will you come to walk with me to-morrow?” I ask.

“I can’t. Nobody can go walking with you any more; it is walking with Ethelwyn and Mr. Smith and Mr. Smith’s ersttime friend and present enemy, Dr. Walnut, and——”

“No, it isn’t!” I interrupt, “not to-morrow. Ethelwyn’s going wheeling with them. There’s a chaperone, since I’m ineligible for wheels, and I’m free to wander. Will you come?”

The mood falls away at that, and my old comrade is looking at me with frank, affectionate eyes.

"Of course I'll come. Why didn't you say so before, Persis?"

A few minutes later he goes off whistling; I slip out the back way to avoid the piazza sparrows, and wander down by the creek; I am not going to walk at all, but somehow I go on and on and finally have to wrench myself away and employ most undignified haste to get back in time for dinner. How can one help it when things call so? And oh, how do people *live* who have no spring-tide in their year!

MAY 10.

We have just gotten back from Maryland; for nineteen years now I've kept the May-time tryst with the wonderful violet pastures, but I never before kept it with Ethelwyn.

We started immediately after breakfast. The sky was unpromising at first and we conferred doubtfully, but as every hour is a season in May we decided against delay, though the clouds grew more and more lowering. We even walked through showers for a few minutes after we left the cars, but we were waterproof—to a moderate extent, that is—and would not turn back. And such showers they were! A very bath of fragrance—it was like being pelted with flower-petals. No wonder that it set the thrushes into an ecstasy of song! And after those few minutes it rained no more, the morning being cool and moist and gray, and the afternoon warm and sunny.

We had to cross the creek to reach the pastures. I waited to see what Ethelwyn would say when she first saw the marvel of those meadows—great, glowing stretches of emerald all shot through with purple and amethyst. She said nothing for three minutes—she just stood looking—then she stretched her arms wide.

"I want to hold them all—*all!*" she cried.

We sat down in the meadows. It was utterly still, except for the birds and the soft singing of the creek. Ethelwyn lay flat on her back, looking up at the hazy sun through a tangle of green blades and stems.

"It is Sleeping Princess Country," she said dreamily, "and it is the one day of the year when mortals can slip in, and we are the only ones who know it. Was it only this morning that I abused Minerva for waking me so early?"

"There wasn't any morning," I said, and laughed in sheer content.

Ethelwyn drew a long breath. "I've had everything I wanted today—*everything!*"

I didn't answer that; if I had, I should have said that I had more than I ever dreamed of wanting.

Ethelwyn's voice grew sleepy.

"Am I getting rooted?" she asked. "Is my hair turning green and

shiny, and are my fingers changing into violets? I feel so queer—and still—and happy!”

But moods are as fleeting as morning mists with Ethelwyn. I saw her turn more and more restlessly towards the brook. Finally she sat up and began unlacing her boots with hasty fingers.

“I can’t help it!” she cried. “I suppose you’ll think it’s dreadful, but I can’t help it—I’m bewitched! That brook is singing an incantation—I’ve got to follow.”

“Ethelwyn!” I cried, “what are you doing?”

“There isn’t a soul in sight,” Ethelwyn replied, without looking at me. “There isn’t a soul within ten thousand miles. I’ve got to do it. I’m going in wading. You’d much better come too, but if you won’t, you can walk along the bank and keep watch.”

She tied her shoes together, stuffed her stockings into them, and strung them across her shoulders. Then she stepped down into the brown, rippling water.

“O-oo!” she cried, with a little shivery scream half of chill and half of delight.

I followed along the bank, scolding like an excited hen.

“Ethelwyn, you must come out—it’s too early to go in wading—you’ll take cold surely. Ethelwyn, come out.”

But Ethelwyn was fairly into the spirit of it then; her little, white feet twinkled merrily through the swirls.

“Tisn’t cold,” she laughed, “it’s warm—and warm! Cousin Persis, you don’t know what you’re missing. You—— Good gracious! what is the matter?”

“It’s a man, Ethelwyn; and he’s coming straight down this way. He’s got a rod and he’s probably going to fish. Hurry—*hurry*, Ethelwyn!”

I reached down my hand. Ethelwyn, after one swift glance over her shoulder, grasped it vigorously (thereby nearly pulling me into the water) and clambered up the bank. But that was only the first step; there was not in the whole pasture a stone the size of an egg—nothing to shield us from the view of the unconscious fisherman, who, from his high vantage-ground, could oversee our slightest movements. But Ethelwyn was mistress of the situation; she promptly dropped down in a little heap among the violets, her shoes beside her.

“There!” she said, “nobody could guess anything now, and he won’t stay there long. I don’t believe there’s so much as a minnow there—if there was originally, I must have scared it away. I’m dreadfully sorry to keep you out in this heat, dear, but it won’t be for long, I’m sure.”

It was hot—I realized it at the word; the sun had burned through the haze and was shining directly down upon us. The violets—little

fire-worshippers—lifted their purple chalices in ecstasy, but we were not violets. It was *hot*. And that man staid: after a little, apparently having satisfied himself that there would be no immediate pressure of business, the creature actually took out a book and began to read. The sight roused Ethelwyn to a frenzy of mischief. She made remarks upon his appearance and character in tones nicely calculated to carry exactly half way across the creek, she threatened to get up and walk off anyway, and she curled her toes daringly through the grasses. I don't know whether I've ever spoken of Ethelwyn's curliness. Her hair curls, her eyelashes curl, her mouth curls up in the most captivating laughter, even her glances curl; but her toes were the curliest of all. Written down it isn't funny at all, but as we sat imprisoned in that wide violet meadow under the hot May sun it seemed to me that I never saw anything so irresistibly ridiculous as those small, white, wriggling toes squirming through the grasses.

"Just think, for your consolation, how Shakesperian we are," she said gleefully,—

" 'Who doth ambition shun  
And loves to live i' the sun,  
Come hither, come hither, come hith——' "

A sudden terror fell upon her face. She gasped the words, "*Mr. Smith!*" and I turned to find that gentleman scarcely a dozen yards away bearing beamingly down upon us. At the same instant I was conscious of something hard coming in violent contact with my knees, and somehow comprehended that Ethelwyn's shoes were being thrust under my dress for concealment. It was all that she could do, she informed me afterwards in the course of an elaborate apology, to be responsible for her feet, she couldn't be expected to manage her shoes too.

The next moment I heard Ethelwyn exclaiming,—

"Why, Mr. Smith, what a great pl——"

I looked at her sharply: I knew that she had been brought up in an orthodox household, and felt that she was perilously near a fall. Somehow she dexterously swallowed the two letters and ended sweetly, "surprise."

"Same to me, I assure you," Mr. Smith replied, smiling blissfully down upon us. "I don't know when I've been more surprised myself than when I recognized you two ladies. Great place for violets—this." He glanced at our empty hands and flushed faces, and a puzzled expression dawned in his eyes. "Have you picked many?"

"No," Ethelwyn returned (she took the conversation bravely—she knew that she dare not impose *that* upon me), "no, we're going to before we go home, but we don't want them to wither. We're just sitting here now. I—I love to sit in the violets. Don't you, Mr. Smith?"

The poor boy looked as distressed as if he had been detected in some fatal discourtesy.

"I—why—the fact is, Miss Dill, I never tried it," he stammered.

"But you can now," Ethelwyn replied with an audacity that took my breath away.

The young fellow looked about desperately. He longed to stay with his divinity, but his face was moist with perspiration and growing redder every second. He was torn between his longings and his fears. He would willingly sizzle upon the sands of Sahara with her, but he showed the heat so horribly, and if, by yielding to his desire, he became an awful Scarlet Spectacle, could he hope that she would ever look upon him again? He ventured a timid protest, his agony making ravages in his smiles.

"I—I'd like to first rate, Miss Dill, but don't you think it's a little bit warm here? If we went over under those cedars, now——"

Ethelwyn's voice had suddenly grown faint. She looked up at him pathetically.

"I—I feel so queer," she murmured. "I think it must be a headache. Oh Mr. Smith, you haven't any bromo-seltzer, have you?"

Mr. Smith's face whitened with concern. "If you've got a headache you certainly shouldn't stay here in this blazing sun—should she, Miss Goldwin? *Couldn't* you just walk over to those trees? I haven't anything,—I'm awfully sorry,—but if I could help you over to the shade there, I could run up to that farmhouse and get you something."

"I—I don't believe I could," Ethelwyn answered. "I'll be all right in a few minutes. But if you could get me something! I've heard that a little salt codfish is good for headaches—maybe you could get that if they haven't any bromo-seltzer. I've heard ever so many people speak of codfish."

"I'll try," he answered earnestly. "Do keep up your courage, Miss Dill, I'll be right back—I will indeed!"

He rushed off, ruthlessly crushing violets at every stride. When he had vanished around a curve in the road, Ethelwyn looked at me. Her face was really white.

"Now we've got to go," she said; "there's nothing else for it—fisherman or no fisherman. Walk right close behind me, Cousin Persis, and be sure and spread out your skirts."

I walked and I spread. It was not easy hurrying in this fashion, but we did it; as soon as we were beyond the fisherman's angle of accurate vision (he had not lifted his eyes from his book all the time) we stopped and Ethelwyn pulled on her shoes and stockings. Then she looked at me, her face a mixture of emotions.

"Cousin Persis," she said solemnly, "at my very last Sunday in

the Bible-class at home we discussed whether a lie was ever justifiable. I took the negative!"

There was nothing to reply to that; it is a fashion life has of toppling over our ideals. Ethelwyn sighed and looked troubled. In a moment, however, her hopeful spirit reasserted itself.

"Anyway," she said, "I did have a headache. The sun and—and—the excitement gave it to me; and I *couldn't* go, could I? And I'll eat some of the codfish—if he brings any—if it chokes me."

She swallowed her words heroically. Mr. Smith appeared, breathless, with a bundle under his arm. I should think that he had brought a pound of codfish. Ethelwyn took her dose with sublime courage; that is to say, she ate half a dozen mouthfuls and insisted upon Mr. Smith's eating a like number; the rest she tore into strips and threw into the creek. The fisherman had left then, but she had hopes of his catching something farther down stream.

And, after all, Mr. Smith didn't spoil the day. He was a simple, straightforward, lovable boy, and he entered into it all amazingly. Besides, he was under the spell of enchantment; he too had come into fairyland, and he alone had found the princess. So they two wandered and laughed and joked and sang, and I kept my secret with the violets.

"Oh, I don't want to go home," I cried, when, all too soon, the shadows crept across the meadow.

Ethelwyn laughed back over her shoulder. "We're not going home," she said, "we're just walking."

And, after all, when I reached home I found it so inexpressibly dear and beautiful I could scarcely believe that something new and lovely had not happened there. It had not. It was just I that was so steeped in gladness; and over and over in my heart rang a line of Whittier's,—

"God gave a perfect day."

MAY 27.

At present Ethelwyn is chiefly interested in birds—chiefly, I mean, of natural objects. Her resolute pursuit of knowledge has proved so contagious that Mrs. Bassett and I have abandoned all lesser pursuits and spend every spare moment poring over the pages devoted to warblers, which we never shall conquer if we live to be a hundred, and sparrows, which are ten times worse. As the result of her enthusiasm a sort of ornithological revival has swept across the neighborhood, and our callers all talk Birds. No, not quite all—there are exceptions; when, upon Ethelwyn's pathetically wondering why the wood-warblers were so named when they can do nothing but squeak, Roger heartlessly suggested that it might be because they would warble if they could, we all declared that such a remark revealed an attitude of mind wholly lacking in the reverence due the subject, and that, thereafter, no

inducements would make us mention so much as a crow in his presence—a resolve we have since kept with heroic fortitude.

However, as I said, we have had no lack of callers to whom we could—and did—hold forth upon the charmed theme. Indeed, we have even had a Field Day, though that, like greatness, was thrust upon me. When Ethelwyn calmly announced one morning that “they”—I was not enlightened as to whom the “they” included—had decided to have a Field Day and invite everyone who was interested in birds, the audacity of the proceeding almost took my breath away.

“Ethelwyn Dill, how in the world are you going to manage them?” I cried. “It will be about as harmonious a gathering as Noah had in the ark.”

“I never thought of that,” Ethelwyn replied, slightly daunted. “I’m afraid that some of them *don’t* precisely fit. However,” gathering courage, “you know how it is when you are absorbed in some great purpose—differences are always forgotten. Why, that is one of the most magnificent things in life, Cousin Persis.”

“I suppose so,” I replied doubtfully. “Still, I think, on the whole, I’d trust more to the lunch, Ethelwyn.”

“But we weren’t going to take any lunch,” Ethelwyn returned, a little alarmed by my view of the situation. “It was to be a purely scientific excursion.”

I thought hard for a moment. “We might have lunch afterwards to celebrate our discoveries,” I suggested, and that is the way that it was finally decided.

Of course, everybody came—I think there were nineteen of us altogether: there was young Mr. Ordway, who was something of an ornithologist and wished himself a hundred times more of one that he might hope to prolong Ethelwyn’s course; Dr. Walnut (I believe I have mentioned Dr. Walnut; he has been calling only two weeks or so), who trailed along glowering darkly at the ornithologist, and labored under the delusion that a yellow-hammer was a carpenter’s tool; a young lady of uncertain age, who impressed it upon us that she had taken up the study seriously, and talked of the hours she put in before breakfast until Mrs. Bassett innocently remarked, “Dear heart, it must be real hard on you to have to work like that,” when she grew suddenly red—and silent; a nice old lady, who came to chaperone somebody or other—or perhaps it was all of us—and brought a bagful of fancywork on her arm, and a dozen others, all of whom were interested in birds—or Ethelwyn: generally, I believe, it was Ethelwyn.

Fortunately, we had arranged to eat lunch upon our piazza on our return. Minerva was to set out tables in our absence, so that we were not burdened with baskets. This, as I said, was most fortunate, for when we tried to keep one eye glued to the glass in order to distinguish



the number of toes of some bird serenely journeying through the tree-tops, and the other eye and hand divided between the bird-book, which never would open at the right place, and our note-books, in which our frenzied records resembled nothing so much as bird-tracks, we found ourselves ill-disposed towards any unnecessary impedimenta. Indeed, I had no idea when I looked at the procession that any bird would stay within a mile of us. I had much to learn. I now thoroughly believe that birds are possessed of a well-developed sense of humor. Migrants that the most patient searching had failed to discover before that morning fluttered all about us, and breakfasted leisurely before our eyes, and made daring flights over our heads, while we—the ones that had come for birds, that is—called each other wildly to look a dozen ways a minute, and began frantic records that we hadn't time to finish, or tried to identify seven birds at once and grew so distracted that we actually stood and argued over an English sparrow! If birds ever laugh, their sides must have ached that day. And far down the road, ambling deliberately after us, her reticule on her arm and a stream of brilliant colors pouring down her dress, came the chaperone, knitting a stripe of a Roman afghan!

As the morning grew warmer, however, the enthusiasm waned perceptibly, all except Ethelwyn's and, presumably, the ornithologist's. I say presumably, for we had scarcely seen them since we started out; they had a way of getting just ahead around a curve, and it was amazing, the number of curves in that road. Dr. Walnut meanwhile sat about on rocks and stopped his mouth with his cane and sulked, once in a while darkly unstopping himself to point to a "robin," which it never by any chance was. Gradually the rest of the party drifted in and settled down in the shade. Nobody seemed inclined to talk much. Indeed, the only really serene member of the party was the chaperone, who, having found a convenient log and examined it for ticks, turned up her skirt with enviable composure and proceeded to knit at ease.

To this silent party returned Ethelwyn, radiant.

"Why, how quiet everybody is!" she exclaimed blithely. "Are we the last? I didn't mean to go so far, but we were following a Kentucky warbler. It has the loveliest song!"

The responses to this outburst were so moderately enthusiastic as to impress even Ethelwyn. She glanced at me imploringly, but I refused to be melted. I informed her mutely that I had told her so. It was Mrs. Bassett who came to the rescue.

"I never was no great," she said, looking cheerfully about at the silent groups, "to go by clock time, I'd a heap rather mind my feelin's. I dunno how you folks are, but *I'm* hungry. S'posin' we go back an' get some lunch?"

It was a stroke of genius—the one appeal that could have harmonized the discontented factions. With a single impulse we rose and started homeward, our spirits restored by the magic word. It was exactly half-past ten.

Since then I've noticed we have not discussed birds quite so exclusively. Only Mrs. Bassett, who has a genius for enthusiasm, has pursued the subject with undiminished delight. She has fastened up a whole row of gourds on her piazza for the wrens, who accepted them immediately and sing regularly every three seconds through the whole day. From below she watches their housekeeping with the keenest interest. She is like a wren herself with her quick motions and her bright glances and unfailing cheer—perhaps that is why they come to her so quickly.

But it seems there are tragedies even among wrens. Yesterday afternoon we found her standing under one of the gourds, her small face dark with indignation.

"Dearie," she said to Ethelwyn, "would you mind climbing up and looking in there—the end one, I mean? I ain't quite so spry as I used to be, else I'd do it myself."

Ethelwyn obeyed, wondering. As her head rose opposite the entrance of the nest a bird flew out; it looked unusually large and clumsy; Ethelwyn stared at it a moment before she realized.

"Why, Mrs. Bassett," she cried, "it's an English sparrow—in your wren's house!"

"They drove the wrens out," Mrs. Bassett replied grimly. "I heard a great racket here four or five days ago, but I couldn't find what 'twas about. There was so many wrens here that I didn't mistrust till just now, when I saw that sparrow-critter fly in. Is there any eggs, dearie?"

Ethelwyn peered into the nest. "Three," she replied.

Mrs. Bassett nodded; her appearance was that of one who has unearthed some monstrous villany.

"Hand 'em down," she ordered. "Do it careful—I don't want they should be broken. I've got water already boiling," she added.

We stared at her in bewilderment, but evidently it was not the time for explanations. She received silently the speckled eggs that Ethelwyn handed down to her.

"You jest stay if 'tain't keepin' you from anything," she said. "I'll be back in five minutes."

Of course, we staid; we wouldn't have gone for worlds till the mystery was solved. In a little over five minutes Mrs. Bassett returned. Her dark mood had vanished and her eyes were full of laughter; she still held the eggs in her hand.

"I'll trouble you to put 'em back if you don't mind," she said,

giving them to Ethelwyn. Ethelwyn took them and started so that she almost dropped them.

"Why, Mrs. Bassett," she exclaimed, "they're hot!"

Mrs. Bassett nodded. "Boiled," she said briefly. "I thought if that sparrow wanted to set," she added, after enjoying the sensation she had created, "she might jest as well have her fill of settin' while she was about it."

It was several days before we saw Mrs. Bassett again. When we did we eagerly inquired about the sparrow. She looked apologetic.

"Well, there," she acknowledged, "I guess 'twas a lesson for me. I thought I was smart, but I've learned that an English sparrow is smarter. What do you s'pose they did? *Went and built right over those boiled eggs!* They did so—built another nest right on top of the first one. I had father pull the whole thing out then. I told him if they did that, I didn't know but they'd be capable of hatchin' out boiled eggs—anyway, I wasn't goin' to risk it. I've learned my lesson. There's one thing I ain't never goin' to give any quarter to, an' that's an English sparrow."

"And the next blizzard——" I suggested wickedly.

But she was too quick for me. "They warn't sparrows then," she retorted, "they was jest—*birds!*"

JUNE 2.

We have had an epidemic of visitors lately, and visitors in Arden are against the laws of nature. Either people belong here, in which case they know it and we know it the moment they look at those western hills, and we give them the clue to every secret way, or—they *don't*. And if you don't, a thousand-years' residence would not be long enough to confer the right of citizenship. Dr. Walnut has been the worst. Since that bird expedition he has haunted us like an uneasy ghost. Once he came to pick a daisy—it was so long, he declared, until we (we!) taught him, since he had gotten close to nature. Ethelwyn took him over on the hilltop, where a million daisies, twisting their tiny necks to follow the sun, face the east in the morning and the west at dusk. He stared in bewilderment.

"Which daisy shall I pick?" he gasped.

"That," said Ethelwyn gravely, "is the important question."

It isn't so bad in the daytime—I can find things to do then—pressing tasks when a moment's delay would be fatal. But when he comes out in the evening, and plumps down into one of our beautiful twilight hours when we are sitting silent with the shadows and sweet, sleepy night-sounds, perfectly, blissfully happy—then I find it hard to forgive him—or Ethelwyn. He appeared the other night when we had been off all day gypsying and came in sunburned and wind-blown and ready to drop. We had curled up in the hammock and were watch-

ing the dusk blot out our world, and the white stars prick through overhead and deepen to gold, and the soft stir of the balm of Gilead at the gate, and we were full of unspeakable content. Then, as I said, Dr. Walnut came. I tried to slip away, but Ethelwyn grasped my skirt and held me fast. So I sat there grim and silent. There should be no hypocrisy about me, at least. Dr. Walnut should not think that *I* approved of him. Gradually, finding that I was utterly forgotten, I was drifting to the edge of content again, when something heavy fell upon my shoulder. It proved to be Ethelwyn's head—tired out by the day, she had actually fallen asleep in the middle of a sentence. So I let her sleep, and I sat up and talked with the man till it suddenly occurred to me that Ethelwyn was really expecting too much of friendship. Wasn't I sleepy as well as she, and had I ever lured any man-destroyer of our peace within our gates? So then I poked Ethelwyn awake and took a nap myself. For two whole hours we sat there alternately pillowing and prodding each other. Through my dozes floated a consciousness that the conversation was of a fluctuating nature, flaming brilliantly during Ethelwyn's periods on duty, and waning during mine, but the man never guessed. At ten o'clock he rose to take a reluctant departure.

"I'm afraid we haven't been very entertaining," Ethelwyn said politely. "We're not always so stupid, but we'd been off all day, and that always has a bad effect upon our wits. It makes the conversation rather spotty—don't you think so?"

Dr. Walnut had noticed nothing peculiar about the conversation. Miss Ethelwyn—and her cousin(!)—were always so entertaining.

"I'm glad you think so," Ethelwyn returned. "Of course, I know that *I* was, but Cousin Persis hasn't generally that reputation. It must be that you are congenial souls."

The astounding ingratitude of this calm statement so took my breath away that I could find no words adequate to the situation. I thought, however, of several things that I would say to Ethelwyn as soon as we were alone; but when Dr. Walnut had finally torn himself away we were both so sleepy that I decided to wait until I could be more effective—in the morning, for instance. But this proved to be a matter in which fate itself was concerned; the very next morning Ethelwyn came to me in a state of splendid indignation.

"Oh, that Dr. Walnut!" she stormed.

I looked at her in surprise. "I thought that you thought he was 'nice,' Ethelwyn? And certainly last evening——"

She ignored last evening.

"So I did!" she rejoined in an injured voice, "not *very* nice, you know,—like people that know more,—but still perfectly gentlemanly and polite. I never imagined,—I'm a perfect goose to tell you, but I

just can't help it,—you know the little sorrel saddle-horse he bought the other day?"

"Yes," I answered expectantly.

Ethelwyn whirled about, eyes and cheeks ablaze. "Cousin Persis, he's gone and named her *Ethelwyn*!"

"Ethelwyn—he hasn't!"

Evidently my indignation was soothing: Ethelwyn loosed the barriers of her anger and the whole tide came sweeping down upon me.

"Yes, and that isn't all. He has a setter, and he has named her *Ethelwyn*, and an Angora, and *she's* named Ethelwyn. I've no doubt that if he chances to have any fancy pigeons or—or—a Berkshire *pig* they will all be named Ethelwyn. Did you ever hear anything so perfectly preposterous in your whole life?"

"I never did hear of quite such a wholesale naming," I returned. I was very much ashamed of myself—it seemed brutally heartless with those tearful blue eyes pleading for sympathy, and yet the thought of Ethelwyn's trotting and barking and mewing about the smitten Dr. Walnut was too much for my gravity.

Ethelwyn's lips quivered. "Yes, laugh!" she cried—"do! I didn't think it of *you*. I do think that I am the most unfortunate girl! Things are always happening to me that never do to anybody else, and I can't help it—I don't do anything to make them! One thing is certain—when Dr. Walnut comes here again you will have to see him, for I shall have a headache. If he comes a thousand times, I shall have a thousand headaches. It will be true too—the very sound of the man's name makes it ache furiously. Just think—I heard it from Minerva! Somebody—I think she said a cousin of her sister's husband—works for Dr.—for that man's mother—and told her. Imagine how I feel to have them talking me over! I think he deserves to be Coventried—don't you?"

"Yes, I do," I agreed seriously, "but I think one other thing too, Ethelwyn. If only you wouldn't be quite so nice to—to people when they first come, it—they—things, you know, mightn't be quite so unpleasant as they sometimes are afterwards."

It was a lamentable failure. I had meant to say it very kindly and wisely and firmly, but I hadn't counted upon the aggrieved reproach in Ethelwyn's eyes.

"Why, I don't!" she cried—"I don't *ever*! Only I can't help being interested in people, can I?"

I gave it up.

After all, both ludicrous and annoying as the incident is, it is not without a large measure of comfort, since it closely foreshadows an exit Dr. Walnut. Of course, I realize that Ethelwyn is one to whom, by some law as inevitable as gravitation, things are bound to "hap-

pen." I am confidently assured that there could be no break in their happening if she were the sole survivor upon a desert island. Equally, of course, after an intimate acquaintance with her covering the twenty-one years of her existence, Cousin Tom must understand this and could not hold me responsible if any particular thing should happen. Yet, at the same time, I wish that he were here. Roger is no good at all: he simply sits and laughs at me in the most irritating fashion in the world: he says that Ethelwyn is a blessing to me—that she is shaking me out of ruts. I can well believe that—*ruts* and Ethelwyn! It isn't that I'm thinking of, or of myself at all, but of the responsibility. Now there are young Mr. Smith—a nice boy, only, of course, his name is against him—or his lack of name—and the ornithologist, who is a fine young fellow in every way, and comes generally the evenings when Mr. Smith doesn't. Well, at least, there is one consolation—there is no longer any Dr. Walnut!

JUNE 7.

I wish that I could share Ethelwyn with all the poor creatures who have never learned that there is such a thing as nature in the world, and so suffer day after day the miserable agonies of ennui! She came into my room to-night with a bit of paper in her hand.

"It's something I've puzzled and puzzled over," she said. "It seems perfectly clear, and yet I can't quite make it out. I suppose it's me—I never did understand poetry very well—but it seems as if I ought to this. Of course you'll see through it as easily as if it were window glass."

Beguiled by such delicate flattery, I attacked the verses with a high heart; there were four of them, and they looked very simple.

"I passed through a garden and plucked a rose  
With crimson petals lapped fold on fold;  
I watched them open hour by hour,  
Till I saw at last the heart of gold.

"The sky was gray and the rain sobbed loud,  
My life was full of bliss untold;  
I walked in a mist of fragrance rare  
That was woven for me from that heart of gold.

"But the sweet life fled from the crimson rose,  
The warm, soft petals fell fast—fell soon,  
And only a haunting perfume told  
Of the beautiful Life I had plucked in June.

"I said, 'I will pluck another rose.  
The flowers were fair—birds sung in tune.  
I passed through the garden—no rose could I find,  
And a voice cried, 'Fool, 'tis not always June.'"

Ethelwyn watched me with curious interest.

"Well?" she interrogated when my silence had outlasted her patience.

It was humiliating, but I had to confess.

"I'm sure I can't tell, Ethelwyn, unless it means lost love; it's safe enough to guess that. It's what ninety-nine out of a hundred of the mysterious ones do mean. What in the world made you copy the thing, anyway?"

But Ethelwyn shook her head. "No," she said positively, "it doesn't mean lost love."

I stared at her in astonishment. "If you know so well, why do you come to me? And how do you know? Unless"—the natural solution dawning upon me—"it's something Dr. Walnut gave you. Really, it's better than I should have expected of him, even if it isn't as clear as the multiplication-table."

"Thank you," Ethelwyn observed with a noticeable lack of enthusiasm. "I'm glad you think it better than Dr. Walnut could have done. I should be sorry if you didn't. And I spoke positively because—well, you see, I wrote it myself, and I might be supposed to know what I *didn't* mean, mightn't I, even if I couldn't exactly tell what I did?"

I stared at the child in consternation.

"You, Ethelwyn——"

"That's what I said," that young lady returned briskly. "But you needn't look that way over it, Cousin Persis—it was merely a scientific experiment."

"I—I don't believe I understand, Ethelwyn," I acknowledged meekly.

"I think very likely you don't—I was quite sure of it when you said 'lost love.' As if *I'd* ever write about lost love! Why, you see it was this way: I picked up a magazine the other day and there were some verses in it that sounded ever so pretty,—all about spring and shadows and sorrow, you know,—some of the lines were just lovely. I thought I'd learn it sometime when I didn't have anything else to do; so I read it over again, and then I found I hadn't the least idea what it was all about, and the more I read it the more tangled up I got. Then I grew provoked at myself for being so stupid, and I took the old thing up to my room and worked over it ten minutes in the morning and ten minutes at night, the way you do over French or anything when you want to improve yourself. But it just grew foggier and foggier, till finally I got really mad. I knew anybody could write a thing like that, and that was why I did it—to prove it, you see. Some of the lines aren't quite so smooth as the others, but it's pretty good, I think! And I proved what I set out to—that you can write poetry without in the least knowing what it's all about."

"Ye-es," I returned doubtfully. Naturally, one hesitates to accept such a startling theory of criticism without a little consideration.

"Only," Ethelwyn added thoughtfully, "it had one result that I hadn't in the least foreseen."

"And that?"

"Why, that I'm perfectly wild to know what I meant myself."

JUNE 20.

I brought home my last armful of daisies to-night. Eight times I've filled the old glass pitcher with them, by which I know that I've counted a month of summer days. These last, though I hunted far for the youngest ones, have grown old and weary; they no longer have strength to climb above the hurrying grasses. The days are growing quieter too; there are bird-songs still, but no more of the sweet, irrepressible tumult with which meadow and woods have been ringing for two months past; the hour of magic madness is gone; the world by contrast seems strangely tame and middle-aged.

Our life has followed the course of nature and sobered down considerably of late. Partly, no doubt, it is the heat, which has a subduing effect upon even the finest enthusiasms; partly it is—circumstances! The ornithologist has suddenly stopped coming. I made some remark about it to Ethelwyn, and she turned rosy and went to her closet to look for—a cup, I believe she said. I refrained from reminding her that cups are more frequently to be found in the china closet in the dining-room.

Mr. Smith has not stopped calling,—at least, I have no reason to suppose that he has,—but he has been summoned North by the death of a brother; of course, we still have not infrequent visitors, but nothing for "stiddy wear," as Mrs. Bassett says. We have not even Roger to enliven us, as he is off on one of the trips.

For some days past Ethelwyn has been a trifle restless; she is not used to having so much time idle on her hands. I could see that it was the divine discontent that always accompanies the evolution of some new plan, and I waited the hour of revelation. It came in due season. We were out on the piazza after dinner, and the dusk had been creeping closer and closer till it drifted like a shadowy veil between us. Ethelwyn was sitting on the top step, her chin propped on one hand while with the other she absently pulled dry twigs from the honeysuckle beside her.

"Somehow it makes me think of my babies, to-night," she remarked dreamily.

I was startled into sitting up.

"Your—I beg your pardon, Ethelwyn—I think I didn't understand."



"My babies," she repeated, raising her voice, "the ones I am going to adopt, you know. Didn't I tell you that I was going to keep an orphan asylum sometime? Only, I suppose, it will take money to run it—and there's Daddy—I'm afraid he wouldn't exactly approve. Of course, I couldn't spoil things for Daddy. But think how lovely it would be to have nice, dirty, noisy little boys—I think I'd prefer boys—clattering up and down stairs and digging in the garden and dumping their treasures all over the house. Oh Cousin Persis, wouldn't it be *dear*?"

It came to me with sudden, heavy reproach. Down in the hot town was the great red brick building, and the bare, hard-trodden, brick-walled yard, and a hundred and fifty restless little creatures shut within it. And up here the wide, sweet fields, and cool, whispering gladness of the woods, and a tiny, laughing brown stream that sang in the night.

"Ethelwyn," I cried, "we will do it!"

"Do what?" she returned. "Why, Cousin Persis, you're all excited. What do you mean?"

"Just what you said—I don't see why I never thought of it in all these years! There's the whole orphan asylum, Ethelwyn, and I know the superintendent. We will go down to-morrow and pick out our babies—one for you and one for me—to keep through all the hot time. After that—well, after that will be time enough to decide."

Ethelwyn flashed about on me. I couldn't see, but I knew that her eyes were like stars, for even her voice was shining.

"You'll go and pick out the very prettiest little girl of them all—one that has golden hair and a cherubic mouth!" she taunted me. "I know you. I've seen you look at babies—pretty babies!"

"At least I won't make eyes at the most impressionable little boy, as you will. I'm almost afraid, after all, that it will be my duty to warn the superintendent, Ethelwyn."

"Wait and see," she laughed back. "He sha'n't be impressionable—I hate impressionable boys. He shall be bullet-headed and—and *tough*. The kind that would pull the cat's tail, if we had a cat, and throw stones at birds and dig wells in your flower-gardens. And I shall train him with such exemplary wisdom and firmness that all the world will wonder."

She sat up, hugging her knees with delight; and then we fell to planning. We were going to be very discreet. We would take them only for two weeks at first, and would ask the superintendent's advice, and get directions from her as to clothing and diet. The one point upon which we were adamant was that they must be *little* children, the kind that you could cuddle up in your arms and sing to in the hour between twilight and dark, "the wishing time of night," that was made for children as much as spring-tides were made for robins.

After we went upstairs I thought Ethelwyn called me, and I opened the door between our rooms. She was standing at her window looking down into the garden all brimmed with moonlight, and she was singing an old lullaby. I closed the door softly—she did not move or hear me.

JUNE 25.

We have our babies. We have been in each other's rooms a dozen times to look at them—the boy lying with the careless, unconscious grace of a young animal, his witching smile curving his lips even in sleep; the girl with her baby brows drawn sharply together, and her tiny hand clenched against the world.

It didn't happen just the way we expected. We went down at bed-time to choose, since it was, somehow, bed-time babies that we were hungriest for. The great red brick Asylum opened its mouth and swallowed us up without winking—glad things and sad things are all alike to it. We followed the superintendent up to the babies' nursery, where all the children under five sleep together. The room was full of small white bipeds that, in their little leg-nightgowns, looked exactly like funny plucked birds. Some of them were sitting in the tiny chairs at the foot of the cots, some were in the hands of older girls—being plucked! Suddenly, at a signal, they all came to the nurse and stood about her in a still, white circle, their little hands folded and their eyes closed. So they recited their "Now I lay me" and the Twenty-third Psalm. Then, without a sound, they were all swarming about us, thrusting warm, eager fingers into ours, and lifting confident faces for kisses.

Ethelwyn got down on the floor and opened her arms wide and tried to gather them all in.

"Oh, how can children grow up without a mother to kiss them good-night?" she sobbed.

The children looked at her wonderingly. One wee boy put out a finger and touched her cheek.

"Lady's kying," he said in an awe-struck tone.

"That's only a wet smile," answered Ethelwyn, kissing the curious finger-tips, and then she laughed to prove it.

In a moment the tiny, crowding white ghosts melted away. They mounted the chairs and climbed over the foot-boards, and so tumbled into their cribs. Before we could get around many of them were asleep. One was not—it was the Boy with his happy eyes and confident smile. He was sitting up in his crib, waiting, and when I reached him put up his small arms for another kiss. I could not resist it—children stick to Ethelwyn like burrs wherever she goes, but usually they are shy with me.

"I must have this one," I said.

Ethelwyn gave me a look—it was a look that said a great many things.

"It *isn't* a pretty little golden-haired girl," I protested weakly.

She turned to the superintendent with a fine disregard of my presence.

"Will you please to show me," she said, as if she were demanding to see cotton cloth for sheeting, "the very homeliest and naughtiest little girl that you have?"

The superintendent looked half puzzled, half amused, but she spoke with quick tenderness.

"These are babies—babies can't be 'naughtiest.'"

"If they can't be naughty, then as naughty as they can," laughed Ethelwyn.

The superintendent's face had changed and she stood thoughtful for a moment.

"There is one," she replied. "She has been here six months and we cannot yet make her play with or even speak to other children. I think that she is homesick, although she can't put it into words. She is only four."

"Show her to me," Ethelwyn said with a quick breath. And when the superintendent led the way to the crib where Rosella lay, her moist baby lips just apart, her brows, even in sleep, drawn together as if in pain, Ethelwyn put out her hands impulsively. Then she drew them back and said simply,—

"We will come for them in the morning."

So in the morning we went and came home with our babies and a bundle of clothes apiece. The Boy tucked his hand confidently in mine and smiled comradeship at every leaf and flower, but Rosella walked stolidly, clutching Ethelwyn's dress, and as silent as the sphinx. Ethelwyn turned anxious eyes to me.

"Suppose she should be homesick with us?" she whispered.

"She couldn't," I returned securely, for I was under the spell of the Boy. But Ethelwyn shook her head, and her eyes were shadowed with doubt.

Fortunately, the dinner-bell rang as we entered the house, and we escorted our newly-acquired family directly to the dining-room, where, by dint of piling small libraries in their chairs we made them visible above the table-edge. Our doubts vanished then. If Rosella was homesick, it certainly had not affected her appetite; she ate on and on, grinding away with mechanical perseverance, her eyes rolling gravely from one to the other of us, but not a word breaking her silence. Indeed, she couldn't talk—she was too busy. But we ceased to worry. The thrill of assured success was ours.

In the afternoon we turned the children loose, while we, upon the

piazza where we could keep a watchful eye upon their progress, investigated the bundles committed to our charge.

Ethelwyn scornfully held up a much-beruffled white dress!

"Look at that," she cried, "for the Forest of Arden! She shall not touch it! She shall live in pinafores and revel in dirt and have her face washed but once a day—and that only as a concession to custom."

She tossed the little, cheap, flimsy thing aside, and then drew it back and folded it gently.

"I suppose her mother worked so hard for it," she apologized, flushing at my smile. "The superintendent said her mother was living, didn't she?"

Hers and the Boy's too."

Ethelwyn looked down at the two children absorbed in the ecstasy of mud-pies in the middle of the path.

"Oh, what a hard world it can be!" she cried.

JULY 9.

Our babies grow more delightfully satisfactory every hour. Rosella's shyness has worn off completely and she chatters and sings the whole day long. Yesterday it rained in the afternoon, and for three blessed hours that child played on the piazza, singing over and over her one little improvised chant of two notes with a slur in the middle—"It's way-ning—it's way-ning."

It grew to be maddeningly monotonous, but haven't we heard a robin sing his song as insistently for three hours at a stretch?

This has been the first wet day; for all the past two weeks they've been tramping from dawn till dark. Such perfectly insatiable appetites we never imagined—I'm sure *I* never had anything like them when I was a child. Not only do they have three full meals and an in-between one, but before the second day was passed they had found the way to the kitchen and to Minerva's favor. One morning she supplied them each with an enchanting cooky in the form of a rooster. After that she was besieged hourly for "takes;" and after a whole day of repeated favors Rosella, dizzied by success, had an inspiration. She presented herself at the kitchen door yet again, and lifted her grave face with its pathetically drooping mouth.

"Lord love you, honey, yo' isn't come back for anudder?" cried Minerva in genuine amazement.

Rosella answered something. Her voice, except when she is singing, is very low. Minerva leaned down to her.

"What is it, honey? Say it ag'in. Yo' ain' close nuff to dese ol' yeres o' mine."

Rosella's serious eyes widened and she raised her voice.

"Want *two* takes," she repeated firmly.

And all this is besides the blackberries, of which, judging from the condition of their faces and clothes, they must consume bushels daily. Apparently, strawberries have been the fruit which has most impressed their imaginations hitherto, for they persist in calling them "black 'trawberries." But as long as they are growing rosier and fatter and merrier every day, what do we care? We carry out systematically Ethelwyn's theory as to dirt; or, rather, we *do* wash their faces more than once a day, but we desist until the stain becomes so dark that we have fears of its being permanent; then we rush for soap. And after all our careful negligence, the blow we received the other day from the Boy! We had been playing with the children, and finally dropped down on the steps, breathless and dishevelled. The Boy stood in front of us critically. Presently he gave his verdict. Pointing courteously (the Boy is always courteous—he is one of those fortunate beings who are born so and cannot, if they would, forswear their charm) to Ethelwyn, whose hair was slightly more negligee than mine, "I guess," he remarked in his sweet little sing-song voice, "I guess I like her hair worser'n your hair!"

After which, what could we do but flee to our rooms and act upon the gentle reproof?

I must acknowledge, however, that, with all the exquisite joy of it, we are also learning the sorrows of bringing up a family; it is astounding to contemplate the depth of ingratitude in those two small beings. Haven't we bestowed blandishments, and Minerva cookies, enough upon those children to win the undying devotion of a whole regiment of ordinarily constituted individuals? Yet again and again we become conscious of great, warm summer silences where the small, shrill voices had been, and, glancing up, ten to one we behold two pairs of sturdy legs vanishing through Mrs. Bassett's door. Boy has even discovered a gap in the hedge of more alluring mystery than the one usually employed between the two houses, and with marvellous rapidity he and Rosella have beaten a well-defined path through it. With a sweet but wholly unyielding determination, he guards this way of delight from the profanation of older feet. It is for him alone, he declares with a smile which strips the statement of all discourtesy, and makes one wonder by what happy gift of the gods one is favored with such delicious confidences. But none of us who gazed daily upon the magic path ever dreamed with what new and startling emphasis its existence might be forced upon our consciousness.

It was the second Sunday at church. The hot summer distances were too long for little feet, so that these Sundays that the children have been with us we have taken them to a tiny chapel near by, a friendly, simple little place, loved of the sweet west winds and tender shadows. The Family behaved with such decorum the first time—

Rosella promptly toppling over to a nap in Ethelwyn's lap, and the Boy sitting gravely with wide, reverent eyes—that we were puffed up with pride, as if, somehow, the Asylum training reflected honor upon us. This ideal lasted through the first morning and half through the second. By that time Rosella's moist, pink face was buried in Ethelwyn's dress, and the Boy was watching a violet butterfly that drifted in the open window with a message from the glowing world outside. But Boy was listening. The minister's voice, a trifle drowsy from the heat, or possibly influenced by the soporific picture presented to his view by his sweltering audience, announced solemnly,—

“There are paths that all of us must walk alone!”

Instantly Boy was on his feet, his eyes shining and his tongue tripping with eagerness. His shrill little voice overrode the minister's.

“Yes—yes!” he cried ecstatically.

Merciful Heaven! What dark depths of anguish will people think that baby has been sounding! Above all, will they think that *we* are the ones who have so deepened his experiences?

Naturally our Family prove a subject of extensive interest to our callers. For a while, until we drew up a series of rules and regulations for the guidance of too enthusiastic visitors, they were in serious danger of having their stomachs ruined for life. It wasn't strange: a box of candy was a small price to pay for the privilege of seeing Ethelwyn with them—to say nothing of their own sufficient charms. As for Roger, with a keenness of penetration equalled only by their transactions with Minerva, they adopted him at sight without fear or favor, and hail his every approach with clamorous shouts of “Woger” that are enough to shake the very treetops. No man could by any possibility resist such flattery. He comes up every night. If visitors follow, he coaxes the children off to the end of the garden, where shrieks of merriment prove the undoing of my manners. I resist as long as I can, but it is only a question of moments before I flee too. As for the evenings when no caller darkens our horizon, I often think what a charming family group we must make together. My own position in the portrait is slightly in doubt. I should prefer to rank as maiden aunt, but as they are not popular in groups, I suppose that I must pose as grandmother. I have conscientious scruples in assuming the role, but really there seems no other open to me. But perhaps if I practise enough, I shall surprise everybody by making a brilliant success of it. The day has passed—fortunately for me—when grandmothers have to know how to knit!

JULY 29.

It has been hot and hot! Morning after morning has come close—sultry—breathless. Flowers droop, trees hang limp; so early as half-past nine yesterday I saw a pair of thrashers in the pool of shade

made by some blackberry-bushes panting with outstretched wings. One cannot escape the fancy that nature has run out of new days and is serving us stale and wilted ones of other years. One can do nothing in such weather except sit down and entertain what philosophy one possesses and wish that it were more, and even the wish is not enthusiastic. I was afraid of the effect upon Ethelwyn, and had a guilty feeling that I ought to take her away somewhere for the next two months, though at the thought I feel such thrills of terror go up and down my spine as a turtle might experience if some kindly-disposed person suggested relieving him of his shell. But Ethelwyn's cheerfulness is proof against even a Washington summer. Her remedies spring up new every morning. The latest is to slip on a wrapper of some thin white stuff that looks as if it might be woven moonlight, and creep into the coolest and darkest corner of the library with a bowl of cracked ice at her elbow and read "Farthest North." She declares that under these conditions she is actually able to shiver for half an hour at a time, an occasional clinking of the ice serving as an encourager to the imagination. This she calls reading realistically, and urges me to acquire the art. But I lack the confidence. I think that I must be too old.

In all the heat, the only creatures untouched in our small world, or the slightly larger one visible from our piazza, are the Family. They play with undiminished ardor, following the shade about the yard as faithfully as sunflowers follow the sun, the only appreciable effect that the weather seems to have upon them being an increase in the demand for "takes." This is hard upon Minerva, but she is under the spell too, and submits with a patience nothing short of angelic.

What a pity it is that people can't carry their originality along with them when they grow up! Probably the Boy will be an utterly uninteresting man who will read the newspapers and grunt at his wife, and Rosella talk about nothing but bonnets and babies. Of course, I don't believe this in the least, in this case. I only say it to make Ethelwyn contradict me. Meantime they are not grown up, and monotony is a word not in their vocabulary.

Yesterday the whole Family, the Boy, Rosella, Tomato, and Eugenia, all burst in upon us at once. Tomato, I should explain, is a small tiger-kitten somewhat the worse for wear. Rosella found her out in the road one day, fell passionately in love with her at sight, and came in with her victim (christened Tomato upon the spot in loving memory of a favorite article of diet) clutched tightly about the middle, since which time the two have been inseparable, a band about Tomato's small body where the fur is noticeably worn testifying eloquently to the constancy of her mistress's affections. I should have interfered but that Tomato's kitten-heart seems to return the devotion, as she is always tagging at the Family's heels, and the further consideration that, in the

weather that we are now enjoying, the removal of superfluous fur must be a relief rather than otherwise.

As for Eugenia, she is of quite a different breed, her ladyship being composed of an old crib blanket rolled to convenient hugging size, with a generous sponge occupying the space usually assigned to brains in the human cranium. She is also possessed of well-defined features—composed of shoe buttons and bits of black lace—and is arrayed in an old apron of Minerva's which gracefully enshrouds her somewhat indefinite figure. But these charms are all rendered insignificant by the exceeding delight of the sponge-brains. Boy calls this portion of her anatomy her "top-mouth," and pours down it daily water enough to drown several ordinarily constituted infants.

The descent of the avalanche was so impetuous that I had only a confused consciousness of Tomato clawing my shoulder in a frantic attempt to gain foothold somewhere, and Eugenia's moist head bumping against my cheek; then I was in the thick of the subject.

"A litty-bitty baby," Rosella cried, her eyes wide with wonder.

"Des *so* big—and black," Boy chimed in his sweet sing-song—"black and all shiny."

"And we's can name it—her said so," Rosella fluttered breathlessly. "We's going name it to-day."

"And we thought——" Boy taking up the chant.

But I interrupted. My dull wits had not yet gotten it clear whether the litty-bitty baby was a beetle or a puppy, the only two black things I could think of at the moment; it proved to be neither, but a newly-arrived picaninny in a tiny darky cabin down the road. I was conscious of a respectful wonder as to when the Family could have gotten so intimately acquainted with our neighbors, but I had no time to meditate upon the subject. Boy's bewitching smile flashed confidently up at me, and I always yield before that smile.

"What did you say, dear Boy?" I asked.

"I said we fought we'd name her Marier, after their cat," he replied, his eyes holding mine steadily. Under the circumstances what was there to do but gravely to assure them that I considered the name a very pretty one and a graceful way of paying tribute to the family cat? I supposed that then I should have rest for a few minutes from abstruse problems, but rest was not to be yet. Boy, in his dear, loving fashion, reached up his mouth for a kiss. Having received it, he was turning away, content, when a question brought him to a halt. He pondered it gravely for a moment, and then, finding it beyond his power, came back to me with the touching confidence in my ability which countless failures never seem to dim in the least.

"Dear Miss Persis," he asked earnestly, "what makes a kiss? Is it the lips or is it the *spit*?"

Bless those children. How did I ever live without them!



AUGUST 3.

Yesterday afternoon the wind began to blow—heavy, hot blasts that sent clouds of yellow dust whirling above the treetops; the sultry weather had been bad enough, but this seemed almost unendurable, and, to make it worse, towards four o'clock great cool, gray clouds, with rain in their arms, climbed the horizon and then went around to the north. But, after all, we did get some—not much, but a little; in a flash the whole world seemed to leap into our eyes—so vivid was each leaf and blade, washed of its dust; and, oh, the sweetness that swept down the air—that utterly ineffable breath of wet woods and fields!

And the next morning was glorious. It was no wonder that Ethelwyn woke to find an eager plan whispering at her ear: if she hadn't, I should have. We were to spend the whole beautiful green day down by the creek.

The Family in high glee immediately retired to the lilacs to consult in regard to the best method of conveyance for Tomato and Eugenia. Ethelwyn went off to get ready, and I to hunt up boxes and oiled paper and dishes that could be left upon the field of battle.

From the kitchen Minerva's rich voice—a dusky twilight voice she has when she sings—floated up in haunting cadences. The children's high, sweet chatter sounded in contrast like the chirping of insects.

' Suddenly, as I stood at the window looking out, such an overwhelming sense of the joy and beauty the old world holds came upon me that it seemed as if the very heaven had opened and something unspeakably glad and beautiful folded about one. A couple of women were coming up the road, their limp calico skirts trailing over the wet grass. I felt such a passion of pity for them, not because of their poverty,—the word had no meaning under such a sky,—but because they could trudge along so indifferently, as if there were no great, glad trees or shining clouds within a thousand miles.

Five minutes later Minerva's face, heavily creased with perplexity, appeared in the doorway.

"Dey's two folkses wants to see you," she announced.

"What kind of folks?" I asked, my head in the closet in a search for boxes.

"Deed, Miss, I dunno; dey ain't quality—dat's certain; daon' rightly 'pear lak day's beggars; seem's lak dey's mighty frustrated ober sumpin'. Reckon I better send dem 'bout dey's business, Miss Persis?"

"Certainly not," I returned severely. "Go and tell them—but there's no need of telling them anything, I'll go myself."

I ran downstairs more curious than anything else; it was the first time since Minerva had dawned upon our horizon that she had failed

to classify callers at a glance. When I recognized the two women whom I had seen from the window I was scarcely less perplexed than she. They were waiting, awkwardly enough, in the hall. One—the small, sharp-eyed one—standing alert and defiant; the other, larger, limp, and untidy, and yet with something of charm still dimly making itself felt, looking about irresolutely, as if she wanted to retreat but lacked the courage. She greeted me with a friendly smile, but the small one acknowledged my presence only by a scanty nod, and began to speak at once, rather, it struck me, from reluctance to delay a pleasant experience than from any urgency or embarrassment.

"Miss Goldwin, I take it? I'm Mis' Hoolan, meself, an' this is me friend, Mis' Daley. I never was one to beat about the bush, an' I ain't goin' to begin now. I s'pose you're wondering what we've come for. Well, I'll tell you: we've come for our children—that's what we've come for."

I echoed in helpless repetition, "For your—*children!*"

"Yes, ma'am, that's what I said, ma'am, an' I ain't one to go back on my spoken word, ma'am. Yesterday I went up to the Asylum to see me Rosella. Mebbe you think a mother likes to have her child at the Asylum—an' her the youngest of six! Folks that ain't never had any of their own can't know much about it." (This was evidently, from her snapping eyes, a carefully planned thrust at my spinsterhood.) "I s'pose I orter be easy on you, since you couldn't be expected to know a mother's feelings. Well, ma'am, I went up there to see me Rosella—I had a new dress I was a-carrying her—there wasn't goin' to be anybody at the Asylum had more than me Rosella. It had ruffles to it an' pink ribbons. An' when I got up there what did I find? I found she wasn't there, ma'am; an' when I asked the superintendent she said she was off in the country—she an' Robbie Daley—with some nice ladies. Now, ma'am, I ain't sayin' you ain't nice (her tone sank upon a note of infinite condescension), but that ain't it. I won't have me Rosella—her that's the youngest of six—so far away from me. Mis' Barnard, she talked a whole string, but I told her 'twasn't a mite of use—she didn't know the feelings of a mother. So she give me this note for you, an' if you please, ma'am, I'd like me Rosella right away."

I took the note which she extended—somewhat the worse for its conveyance from the superintendent's hand to mine. It was brief and characteristic, but it offered one faint gleam of hope.

"MY DEAR MISS GOLDWIN: It is enough to make one wish sometimes that one's memory was an utter blank upon the subject of the fourth commandment. Oh, not often, of course—reason reasserts itself. And we see enough pitiful things here, Heaven knows; it would seem as if one ought to welcome comedies. But there are some like the bearer of this

note (who cannot read writing; I only wish that she could) who seem utterly selfish in regard to their children. I've told her how much better it is for poor little Rosella to be out in the country this hot weather, but my arguments were so much wasted breath. And so, since some irony of fate has made her the child's mother, I suppose that she must have her way. I know of no law to invoke upon our side. But possibly you can prevail with the boy's mother. She's a lymphatic sort of a creature who would scarcely be moved to emotion if her boy were carried to Kamtchatka! Mrs. Hoolan has simply dragged her along for effect. At least I think so. Good-luck to your efforts with her!

"CAROLINE BARNARD."

I looked at Mrs. Hoolan.

"Do you know what Miss Barnard says here? She thinks that it is much better for Rosella with us. There are so many at the Asylum, they tease and frighten her. You know how grave and still she was there, and here she is laughing and singing all day long."

Mrs. Hoolan smiled; it was such an intensely exasperating smile that it was all I could do to keep my hands off her.

"Yes, ma'am, I make no doubt you mean well, ma'am, but the feelings of a mother is such that when she makes her child a dress and goes to see her, she wants to see her, ma'am."

I longed to reply that I should have thought the feelings of a mother would be such as to want her child to be where she would be strongest and happiest, but for Rosella's poor little sake I tried once more.

"If you only were willing to let her stay through the hot weather," I began. Then I saw that it was useless. A bright red spot leaped into the woman's thin cheeks and an ominous dignity fell upon her manner.

"I'll thank you to give me me child, ma'am," she observed frigidly.

"Certainly,—you are her mother,—I cannot keep her against your insistence. But you will let the boy stay, will you not?" I pleaded, turning to the other woman.

She smiled—an irresistible smile it was. I knew then what was the haunting familiarity that had puzzled me when I first saw her. She hesitated irresolutely, but Mrs. Hoolan gave her a monitory dig in the side, and she was obedient.

"I reckon not," she said gently.

"But when you see how well and happy he is? I'll call him in and you can see. Perhaps you could stay and take lunch with him, couldn't you?"

She looked pleadingly at Mrs. Hoolan, but that lady held her with a piercing glance.

"I reckon not," she repeated helplessly.

There was nothing more to do—the case was lost, and, angry and

heart-sick, I went in search of the children. I found them out in the vegetable garden with Ethelwyn crying over them.

"I was coming downstairs and I heard," she explained, absently wiping her eyes with Eugenia. "I think it's just *wicked*! I think there ought to be a law against such mothers. *She* doesn't care. You needn't try to be moral and all that—you know yourself that she doesn't. She just wants to have her own way, that's all. You needn't make big eyes at me either—I don't care who hears; and when Rosella has learned how to laugh too—and Tomato—and Euge——"

She trailed off into incoherences; then two calico-clad figures appeared, advancing down the walk. Ethelwyn underwent instant petrification. I was afraid that she might say something to be vehemently repented later, but she said nothing—she took her fill in glaring.

It was curious to watch the children. Boy, as soon as he recognized his mother, ran forward with pretty delight, but Rosella stood like a little statue, her brows drawing together in the old unhappy way, and her old silence falling upon her; it was as if she had stepped suddenly from the freedom of sun and wind into close prison walls.

Mrs. Hoolan stooped and kissed her effusively, murmuring endearments which changed in tone as the child continued unresponsive. Ethelwyn turned sharply away.

"I'll get their things," she said in a muffled voice. "I think Mrs. Bassett is coming."

Mrs. Bassett was coming—through the hedge. So was Minerva from the kitchen, her hands full of roosters, and Peter from the stables, his fumbling fingers trying to twist horsehair rings. Even old Dilly hobbled out from the back porch. The children stood perplexed and half frightened by the commotion. Boy's mother looked about the circle apologetically, but Mrs. Hoolan stood erect and triumphant. She even had the supreme audacity to wish that the young lady would hurry up with Rosella's clothes, as they had a long walk before them and 'twas getting on in the day. When Ethelwyn came back with the bundles and thrust them wordlessly into the other mother's arms Mrs. Hoolan merely sniffed. And truly she could well afford disdain.

Five minutes later we stood at the gate looking down the road after the little procession. Boy kept turning and waving his hand to us, but Rosella trudged on without a backward glance. Suddenly there was a scramble and a dash, and a streak of yellow flashed by us and darted down the road—the ever-faithful Tomato. Ethelwyn went in pursuit. The chase was a long one, but she came back at length with the kitten struggling in her arms.

"I suppose," she said hysterically, "Tomato's mother will appear and claim her offspring next. It only needs that to make the tragedy complete!"

AUGUST 27.

Such a desolate two weeks as it was after the children went! It didn't seem as if we could ever get used to the silence, and mealtimes were so forlorn that we practically boarded with Mrs. Bassett. But lately things have been happening—not to me, of course, nor yet, what is remarkable, considering the nature of events, to Ethelwyn. They are chiefly concerned with our handmaid in the kitchen.

The first intimation we had of the exciting course of events was a scrap of paper I picked up on the dining-room floor. I supposed it one of Ethelwyn's nature notes, which blow about the house like autumn leaves, and unfolded it idly. The words that met my startled eyes were these, "For your rosy cheeks and curly hair I always did admire." I carried the paper to Ethelwyn at once.

"Do you think," I said sternly, "that it is fair to him to leave such things where anybody can read them?"

"What him?" asked Ethelwyn.

"I don't know, I'm sure, I haven't been enlightened. Possibly this will recall it to your memory."

Ethelwyn read the bit of paper with a bewildered face.

"But this isn't mine," she said. "People don't admire—I mean—well, when people talk about my hair they generally say red, not curly."

"But you are the only one who has rosy cheeks."

Ethelwyn gazed at me pityingly.

"It is evident," she said, "that you are not acquainted with works of the imagination. This, my dear, is plainly intended for Minerva."

I scorned the idea. "It can't be, Ethelwyn. Why, she's as black as midnight; the reddest rose that ever bloomed couldn't prevail against such undiluted ebony as hers."

"It's easily proved," Ethelwyn replied. "We can ask her, you know."

So we carried the paper to the kitchen; to my amazement, Ethelwyn was right. Minerva welcomed it effusively. Incidentally she furnished an explanation of what followed later.

"I done thought I seed the end of that," she said, tossing her head.

"But, Minerva, is he a nice young man?" Ethelwyn questioned gravely.

"'Deed, Miss, I dunno. I ain't troubling myself none 'bout him en his sassy letters. I guess if I ain't fin' a better-lookin' nigger than him I'll trabble alone all my days."

"There's somebody else then," Ethelwyn cried, with the never-failing interest of the feminine in all matters of the heart.

Minerva turned and stared in honest amazement.

"Land o' Goshen, honey!" she exclaimed, "deyse allus niggers

taggin' 'round. I'se been mar'ied three times already, an' I dunno how many more's befo' me no mo'n you do. You see, I ain' exactly harnsome, but I was allus sort o' takin'."

Incomprehensible as it would seem to a casual observer, we proved this statement true. How long it had been going on I've no idea—I suppose we had both been too much occupied with piazza callers to notice the guests entertained at the rear of the house, but now that our attention was called to the matter, we found that there was rarely an evening when some dusky admirer did not visit the kitchen. They were of all shades and ages, from old Uncle Eph, stubbing along with the help of a bulging green umbrella, his shining, monkey-like face knotted into a thousand wrinkles, to gay and jaunty "yaller boys" redolent of cologne, and visible far through the dusk by the brilliance of their attire.

So, really, after such an illuminating discovery yesterday's incident might almost have been expected, only somehow it found us unprepared. It was the last night of the house-party. It was so still and empty after the children went that we had to do something, and neither of us had the courage to adopt a second family and brave another such experience. I offered to go away somewhere with Ethelwyn till the heats were over, but she wouldn't hear of such a thing; I'm afraid she remembered some of my views upon the subject of leaving home. So, finally, we compromised upon the house-party—an August house-party in Washington would savor of novelty at least. But up here on the hill there is always a breeze, and we had all the world to wander in, and we kept out of each other's way till the worst of the heat was over each day, and staid up till all hours of the night and morning, when things were sweet and cool and dewy, and we really surprised ourselves by the success of it.

The party lasted a week, and was to wind up with an imposing feast, of which each member suggested one course. The result was somewhat conglomerate, but apparently pleasing to the inner man. It was between the second and third courses that the pause occurred. It was a long one and continued to lengthen—it lasted fully fifteen minutes by the clock; I hope our guests didn't know as accurately as Ethelwyn and I did. We compared notes afterwards and both declared that it was the longest fifteen minutes that we ever lived through. Then Minerva appeared with—I believe it was blackberry shortcake, and the meal flowed peaceably to its close.

The next morning I went into the kitchen for an explanation; it came with compliant readiness.

"'Deed, Miss Persis, I was right sorry to keep you all waitin', an' dat's a fact, but the ash gentleman was axin' me to marry him, an' I was 'bleeged to stop an' tell him why I couldn't."

There must have been some fatal spirit abroad in the air that night, for but a few minutes later Ethelwyn came to me.

"You knew that—Mr. Smith," she began, running her finger absently around the tray where I was washing the breakfast silver.

"I believe that I do," I responded.

Ethelwyn picked up one of the forks and examined the pattern with extreme interest.

"I'm afraid—he won't—be coming here any more," she said with difficulty.

"Oh Ethelwyn," I cried, "how could you!"

She turned at that, her face flushed and her eyes full of tears.

"I couldn't help it, could I?" she protested. "And I liked him so much, and I'd talked and talked to him about that pretty Miss Pollard, and told him how lovely she was and all, and—Cousin Persis, what makes people go and spoil things so?"

I don't understand it. The child was really hurt over something. I'm afraid we haven't yet seen the last of Mr. Smith. I shouldn't put it that way—he's a thoroughly nice fellow—I asked Roger about him. If only he had a name!

OCTOBER 18.

Oh, the wonder of the golden world! We had thought autumn never was coming. Day after day we woke to green hills and summer winds, and the trees, the middle of October, still held their black-green shadows. Then suddenly, all in a breath, it changed. The trees on our sunset hill stood out entrancingly like great bubbles of color. The tulip down in the hollow flamed like a golden torch, and the beeches—there is no word to tell the magic of the beeches. The "How to Know" books grow dusty on the shelves while day after day we walk or sit still and wonder.

We do such happy, idle, foolish things. We spend hours gathering chestnuts—though neither of us eats them, even with the inducement of an open fire by which to roast them. But how else can we get such a delicious sense of sunlight, and the beauty of the copper-colored ground, and the joy of rustling through dead leaves, and the thrill of rapture when you find a specially fat prize, and all the thousand indescribable scents and sounds and memories that make an autumn day? So every night the pile of shining brown treasures in the garret grows larger. Of course, we're not going to waste them. Some day—the plan is Ethelwyn's—we are going to hire a push-cart and get Peter to take the load down to some of the city alleys and scatter autumn's largess. I suggested to Ethelwyn that she needn't think that she could do such a simple thing as give away a few bushels of nuts without changing the world thereby. Who knows how many nickels she would divert from worthy and voluble Italians, who likewise have *their* pushcarts laden

with chestnuts for which they expect recompense at the rate of five cents a quart? Is it charity to feed little darkies by taking the chestnuts—metaphorically speaking—from little Italians' mouths? But Ethelwyn says that she is going to particularly direct Peter not to go where there is any chestnut-dealer; or if he should chance to, and the dealer seem annoyed thereby, he is to buy some more nuts from the aggrieved vender to add to his original stock. I'm afraid that Ethelwyn would never shine as a student of political economy.

But nuts are not our only treasure. The library looks like a veritable corner of the forest; we bring in gorgeous branches of ruby and gold, and bank them over the mantel-piece and the windows and the bookcase. There are sheaves of asters too, like purple twilights, and white Michaelmas daisies,—All Angels, by the pretty English name,—and scrawny branches of witch-hazel. That is not in bloom yet, but we like to get the seeds and hear them explode. Some evenings there will be quite a volley of fairy musketry about us. And since it is our whim just now to have nothing disturbed, the flowers change to white, fluffy ghosts that go wandering about the room, and the dead leaves fall and blow about in little eddies and drift into heaps in the corners, and we sit in the midst of it and dream of the golden days.

But we are not idle these evenings—far from it; in fact, in our eight months in Arden we never have been busier. It isn't enough to load our arms with trophies—our skirts come loaded too. Never before did I realize how many of her children Nature propagated by means of certain persistent qualities. Tiny fingers clutch at us from every wayside, and seldom miss their mark—burrs, pitchforks, beggars' lice, and a hundred others of, no doubt, equally pleasant names and attributes. At first we paid no attention. "Why shouldn't the poor little weeds have a good time as well as we?" Ethelwyn demanded. But when the poor little weeds began to fringe the bottoms of our skirts so that every step drew them across our ankles, and when they began to climb up our stockings, and gather in great clods upon our underskirts, we changed our minds. At first we merely surreptitiously dropped behind bushes (for some especially brilliant leaves!) and clutched madly at the offending mites, a moment later joining each other flushed and guilty, with a few dull or ragged leaves which somehow showed no trace of the magic glamour which had lured us; then we grew bolder, and when we found our skirts pinned together with burrs, we openly and severely wrenched the tenacious green things out.

But the climax came one night in the library, when Ethelwyn, who had been lying on the couch, arose suddenly and appeared before my astonished vision with the couch cover sticking to her back like a plaster that hadn't been trimmed off to fit her.

"There are in the human world," Ethelwyn observed after one



glance over her shoulder to see what was pulling, "people who abuse your kindness. I've discovered that Nature herself at times shows the same weakness. If you'll pick me off, Cousin Persis, I'll pick you."

There has been in all this wonderful month just one drawback. There was a serpent in Eden. In Arden there are—spiders. There are days when the whole world shimmers silver with the tiny lines floating from every fence and bush—strange symbols of the *wander-lust* that reaches so far down creation. I never see one of the out-reaching threads without wondering how far the little traveller goes on such frail crafts. Yet though we brush aside the threads everywhere, though many a time we find them flying from our skirts or hair or even our noses, we've never yet found a spider on one, and they do not trouble us. It is the spiders that wander without webs that vex our peace. Spiders are the one thing that Ethelwyn cannot endure. A snake she views with equanimity, and a mouse is a matter of utter indifference to her, but a spider sends all the color from her face. I'll never forget the first one we saw this fall. We had gone for purple asters, but the hillside was so warm and sunny and still that we sat and sat there, doing nothing, saying nothing, but supremely content. Suddenly Ethelwyn sprang up with a scream, shivering from head to foot.

"Oh, *look!*" she gasped.

For a moment I could see nothing, the creature was so exactly the color of the twigs and stones over which he was crawling; had he been still I never could have discovered him in the world. It was a large, brownish-gray spider, fully two and a half inches in spread. I rose and shook my skirts.

"Let's go home," I said, "and sit—and sit—on the table!"

"I'll never dare sit on the ground again!" Ethelwyn wailed, "and it was so sweet and still and lovely."

"Don't you suppose you could if we scraped the ground about us carefully?"

"Do you suppose so?" she asked doubtfully.

"And we would face different ways, so that each could watch the other."

"We might try it so once," she admitted.

So that is the way we do, when we feel inclined to rest; if we can, we find a rock, upon which, for some inscrutable reason, we feel safer, although, as Ethelwyn observes, we may be sitting over whole families of the Things (she never speaks the word if she can help it); if not, we go carefully and painstakingly over a large area of ground—say a circle with a diameter of seven feet; if within this space we find a Thing, we leave it at once; if we do not, we seat ourselves carefully in the exact centre, facing each other, and tuck our skirts tightly about us, that no Things, if they should by any possibility elude our vigi-

lance, could crawl up underneath. So we sit. It takes away somewhat from our old freedom, it is true. Perhaps that is the reason that we've taken to walking more and sitting less, though Ethelwyn says it's because it is getting colder. Even then our trials are not wholly ended. As the nights grow sharper, big black spiders lurk in the corners of the steps and doorways and take every opportunity to get into the house. Ethelwyn poured one from her stocking one morning, since which event she always has Minerva come in and make a preliminary examination before she will dress. At another time, glancing carelessly at one of her window-screens, she saw a hairy black leg thrust around it, then another and another, followed—with some difficulty, owing to the narrowness of the passage—by a fat, black body. She was so petrified with horror that she forgot to call for several minutes, and then it took the four of us—Minerva, Peter, Ethelwyn, and I—half an hour to hunt it down. The hunting was chiefly done by Peter—though not from any lack of willingness on Minerva's part be it said in justice to her heroism. I think she rather enjoys finding a Thing and carrying it from the room by one leg, its seven other legs writhing and squirming about her thumb and finger. It seems cruel to condemn even Things to a fiery death, so she has orders to carry them down to the brook and throw them in where the current is swift—she must be very particular upon that point. Even then Ethelwyn has qualms of conscience.

"They'll be sure to catch on a leaf or twig or something, don't you think so, Cousin Persis? Or if they don't, they can swim, can't they?"

But I am profoundly ignorant of the whole subject. I have my own conscience to face—I can't be responsible for Ethelwyn's.

But, in spite of all our happy outland hours, I am worried about Ethelwyn. She is restless and distraught, and comes downstairs in the morning with pale cheeks and shadows under her eyes. She declares that there is nothing the matter, but I told her seriously yesterday that if she didn't seem more like herself soon, I should send for Cousin Tom. She called me an "absurd old dear," but she didn't object, and that in itself was alarming. I can't bear to think how I should miss her if Cousin Tom carried her off; yet I couldn't take the responsibility of her possible illness. I have suspected for a long time that Mr. Smith was concerned in the matter (I met the poor boy down-town yesterday, and he looked so grave that my heart ached for him), and I grow daily more certain of it. A week or two ago Ethelwyn was seized with a sudden desire to go to Mount Vernon again. I had sprained my foot a little in one of our walks and could not go, but Mrs. Bassett readily agreed to take my place. Somehow, though she was so sweet and sympathetic, I fancied Ethelwyn was a little relieved at the change of chaperone. When that evening she walked into the library where

Roger and I were lazing, her cheeks were brilliant and the old laughter was in her voice.

"See what I've got!" she triumphed, thrusting a white rose in my face.

"Ethelwyn Dill, I believe you went for that!"

"The last one on the bush!" she declared—"the very last! Wasn't the gardener a dear to give it to me? I told him I didn't think I ought to take it, but he seemed to think that I needed it particularly. He said the charm couldn't fail with the last rose on the bush; I would only have to show it—I needn't even say a single word."

Roger rose suddenly and went out to the kitchen. I believe he said something about wanting to speak to Peter.

Ethelwyn's eyes sought mine in perplexity.

"I hope I didn't drive him away," she said. "He went as if he were—oh, fired out of a mortar!"

She laughed as she said it, but I knew that she was touched. Ethelwyn is not accustomed to having people vanish from her presence as if fired from mortars.

"Oh, you needn't mind that," I answered cheerfully. "It's just one of his whims to dislike superstitions. I shouldn't encourage him in it if I were you—I don't."

"I suppose," she remarked in a small, snubbed voice, "he thinks I'm dreadfully silly. But I don't care," gathering spirit, "*I* think superstitions are lovely—some of them, that is. It's only stupid scientific people that are too busy knowing things to have the least idea how much nicer it is just to enjoy them that can't see the beauty of superstitions. I'd like to tell him so."

"Why don't you?" I suggested.

"I think I will," she replied with determination.

And at dinner she did, but I don't think she was satisfied with the result. So far from being impressed, Roger was greatly amused at the attack, and the most well-balanced souls have been known to utter protest when a noble and righteous indignation has called forth nothing larger than amusement.

I hoped that the change might be lasting, but the next morning Ethelwyn's strange silent mood had fallen upon her again, and it has been with her ever since; not, of course, when she is with others,—then she is her merry, whimsical, affectionate self,—but when she thinks no one is noticing. I wish that I knew what to do for the child. The only thing I know is to coax her out to the hills for the healing of the day; it is a day that loves one and holds one close; it seems as if it must comfort her.

LATER.

The day had such a disastrous ending! Ethelwyn was more easily persuaded than I had dared to hope, and out in the wonderful golden

air she lost for a little while her strange, sad silences, and caught back her merry ways once more. We wandered on and on, gathering the last autumn harvests—oak- and sumach-leaves and white Michaelmas daisies with their heavy honey sweetness, and bees, dazed and stupid with the cold, crawling clumsily through them. We broke the branches carefully, so as not to disturb the bees; they never sting, and we liked their low humming and had a fancy to carry singing blossoms to our very door. When we reached home we sat down on the steps and shook them out, sending fluttering with them a shower of scarlet sumach-leaves that drifted through the still air and glowed like sparks on the path.

Ethelwyn, idly rearranging her great armful, suddenly plunged her face into the fragrant heap.

"There's something so sweet in there," she said. "I suppose it is just the daisies, but I thought for a moment it was something different." She sat idly thridding her fingers through the heap of scarlet and cinnamon. Presently, absently at first, but with growing wonder, she began to rub the end of her nose. I, who had fallen to dreaming, did not notice till she roused me.

"Cousin Persis," she said in a curious voice, "is there anything on my nose? It *feels* as if it were growing like a magician's tree! A moment ago the end of it felt like a cherry—then it grew as big as a plum—now it's an apple! If it keeps on, it will be a—a pumpkin, and my face will be all hidden behind it. Cousin Persis, am I dreaming, or what is happening to me?"

I stared at her in dismay. On the end of her small nose there was, unquestionably, a decided swelling.

"Ethelwyn," I cried, "drop your leaves and let me look at them. Child, child, why *didn't* you read your 'How to Know' for this at least! Don't you see that you have a branch of poison sumach there?"

"Those very brightest and loveliest of all!" Ethelwyn groaned. "And I must have put my face right down in it. Oh Cousin Persis, isn't there *anything*—vaseline—witch-hazel—Jamaica-ginger? I'd even take cod-liver oil. You don't suppose it will shut my eyes all up, do you?"

She was running into the house, and I followed. By the time my slower feet could overtake her she had flown to the medicine-closet and smeared her nose with vaseline. I gave one look, and then stood petrified. Under the yellow grease that blister showed as large as a pea and black as ink.

Ethelwyn flashed about and ran to the mirror. When she came back to me she was quite serene.

"I always knew that I could rise to a great occasion," she said, smiling at me with such peculiar effect that I could only gaze in hor-

rible fascination,—“that a real calamity would find me full of calmness and courage. And what could be a greater calamity than to go through life with an African tip to an Anglo-Saxon nose? Besides, my hands feel funny. Do you suppose they are going to turn African too?” She stretched out her hands and viewed them critically. Angry red spots and patches had sprung up all over them.

“Perhaps I might just as well leave them unvaselined?” she hazarded.

“I think you’d better,” I replied. “We’ll have a doctor prescribe the next formula—I’m going for one now. Tell Peter to clear off the leaves, Ethelwyn, but to throw them away—not burn them. A poisoned Ethelwyn is enough—I don’t want a poisoned Peter.”

“I should think you would,” Ethelwyn said whimsically, “it’s so beautifully alliterative—‘Peter picked a piece of poisoned sumach.’ I don’t *want* any doctor, Cousin Persis!”

“For once,” I returned firmly, “your wishes don’t move me in the least. I shall bring a doctor home with me.” I was hurrying about gathering up my gloves and purse.

Ethelwyn’s voice pursued me. “I hope he’s an *old* doctor,” she said. “I won’t see any other—not this way!”

“Ethelwyn,” I cried, “I believe you are incorrigible.”

“Yes’m,” she returned meekly, “I suppose so. But it’s so much nicer than being monotonous, you know!”

If I hadn’t been so anxious, I should have punished her by bringing back Dr. Agnes Wintergreen, but I know it’s foolish of me—I never yet could bring myself to have confidence in a woman physician. So I went for our old family doctor, and I described in such vivid, if unscientific, terms the state of Ethelwyn’s nose, and my fears for the effects of poisoning upon her present run-down condition, that I had him up here ten minutes after I reached home. He laughed at me then and told me that it would all disappear in a few days. But I didn’t mind being laughed at in my relief; besides, he acknowledged that it was a bad thing to let the poison get in one’s system.

So now Ethelwyn goes about with a bandage across her nose and more bandages on her hands, and smelling like a whole pharmacopœia; she seems to find herself unusually interesting, and is disposed to treat the matter as a remarkably happy joke. If poisoning often has this effect, I shall unhesitatingly recommend it to all sufferers from melancholia.

NIGHT.

I am sitting here stunned! That I should have been so stupid! I am a disgrace to my sex! I can’t write connectedly, my very pen goes off in little jumps and spurts; as for ideas, they are hopping like—fleas!

Ethelwyn and I had settled down for a long, quiet evening in the library. Peter had lighted the fire, and the room was in one of its most winning moods. Under the dancing lights it seemed as if the very books were pushing gently forward to join the circle. We were pretending to read, but Ethelwyn had not turned a page for twenty minutes, and I was openly and shamelessly fire-dreaming, when the bell gave a tremendous peal. We both started, and Ethelwyn dashed for the stairs. She stood there a second, unconsciously grasping her bandaged nose with one bandaged hand and sent a shrill and peremptory whisper across the hall.

"If it's any caller," she commanded with a reckless defiance of grammar, "tell them I'm sick and just can't see them. Make him understand" (even then the pronoun, which was distinctly Ethelwyn's, amused me) "that I—I've had the doctor to-day and I *can't*! Don't let yourself be persuaded, Cousin Persis. You know you are easy to get around, and——"

But here Minerva, ploughing into sight from the end of the hall, broke short the pleasing and veracious description of my failings, and Ethelwyn vanished like a white moth in the upper shadows.

And, after all, it was only Roger. I was in half a mind to disobey her and call her down, but I remembered just in time that Roger was a man, and that no man save the doctor, no matter if he were as little to be considered as the "ash-gentleman," would be permitted to gaze upon Ethelwyn's nose in its present dusky estate.

Roger dropped into a chair, but there was an unusual restlessness upon him; had he been a woman, I should have said that he was nervous, so alive was he to every sound. Somehow too our old, easy talk was beyond reach to-night. I gave it up at last and went back to the fire as more companionable, and left him to his own devices. He was wandering about the room fingering trifles, for which usually he professes a masculine aversion, or stopping and staring at the books; his voice came to me from a dark corner behind my back.

"Where's Ethelwyn to-night?"

"She's upstairs. She ran when she heard you coming, and I am upon no account to call her down. I shall be visited with all the penalties if I do. You wouldn't make me suffer, would you?"

He came around in front of me and looked down at me in something like his old fashion—at least, I supposed that it was. I was punishing his bearishness and wouldn't look up; but when I heard his voice I looked quickly enough.

"She isn't—sick—I hope?" he asked.

I couldn't answer. I only stared and *stared*! He half laughed, and then pulled a chair over beside me.

"I am glad you know, Persis," he said; "I never dreamed that you

didn't before—I felt as if the whole world must see. But I was sure one of the other fellows was ahead, I was so much older and graver. I couldn't believe I stood any chance. And I held off too, because I knew how she loved you, and since I was your cousin, I was afraid that she might not feel quite free. So I kept away when I could, and when I couldn't—oh, I've been a bear a thousand times! What can she have thought of me!" He got up and paced the floor restlessly. "Anyway, I've got to settle it to-night," he finished.

I put out my hand to him. "Not to-night, dear boy—you can't. It isn't anything serious,—don't be worried,—only Ethelwyn got poisoned yesterday with some sumach, and the poison settled in her nose. The doctor says that it will go in a few days, but if I let you see her now she'd never forgive me. Besides, I couldn't—I couldn't get her downstairs. It isn't a bit romantic, but the barrier is as impassable as the Arctic Sea."

He stared at me as if I were delivering an oration in ancient Syriac.

"She won't come down just because her nose is swollen?" he cried. "Nonsense! I mean,—I beg your pardon, Persis,—only I've *got* to see her! Don't you understand that I've waited all summer? May I go to the stairs a minute?"

I nodded helplessly. He took the distance at three strides and looked up into the darkness.

"Ethelwyn!" he called.

A silence as of the grave was his only answer.

He called again with an emphasis that to an uninitiated observer would have seemed to savor of impatience rather than love.

"*Ethelwyn!*"

To this a small, far voice answered faintly, but not encouragingly,—  
"I hear you—I'm not coming down."

"You must!" he replied firmly. "I've got to see you. Do you hear, Ethelwyn? I've *got* to!"

The voice sounded nearer, and a bit of uncertain laughter floated downstairs; he frowned—a man never will understand a woman's laughter.

Ethelwyn's voice seemed, however, to have gathered spirit.

"I don't see how you're going to manage it. I've said I'm not coming down, and I'm not."

"You won't?"

"*No!*" The voice this time was like the stamp of a small and emphatic foot.

The man gathered himself together. One could feel sparks flying.

"Of course, I can't make you, Ethelwyn; but if you won't come, I shall say what I want to right here. I think the doors are ajar through to the kitchen and Minerva has company. I shall say it loud enough

so that you can't help hearing. If others hear, I can't help that. Will you come down?"

"I—can't—I—oh, you don't know—my nose is awful."

"Child, I don't care about your nose. It can be as big as an onion if it wants to. It would only be so much more of you to——"

I coughed warningly. Really, I had some rights in my own house, or supposed that I had. From upstairs came a distressed protest,—

"Oh, *don't!*"

"Will you come down, then?"

"Wa—wait a minute." There was no mistaking the tears in the voice now.

I walked over to him and shook his arm. "You shall not torment her," I said indignantly. "You come away and let her alone."

But he felt me no more than if I had been a grass-seed. In fact, I was shaking only his body—his soul was upstairs.

There was a movement up in the shadows.

"If—if I come down, will you promise to shut your eyes and not look at me?"

The expression that came over his face made me sink down on the stairs helpless with laughter.

"Heavens, Ethelwyn!" he cried, "what do you suppose I'm made of?"

"Well, then——"

His voice was ominous. "I'll give you three minutes more."

I could hear the stir of Ethelwyn's dress. The old clock counted off the seconds with brutal indifference, 60—80—90—100—120——.

Roger had his mouth open to speak, when he was silenced by an April voice from above.

"You can stand on the piazza and I'll go to the library window, and that's *all* I'll do. If you try to talk to me here, I'll run into the closet and stuff my ears, and if I do that I couldn't hear a fire-alarm—so now!"

Without a word Roger turned and flung open the front door. A breath of warm autumn air, pungent with the smell of burning brush, drifted in and was cut in two by the slam of the door.

There was a rustle above me and I stepped meekly aside. A small figure with scarlet cheeks and radiant eyes and dusky nose swept by me and into the library. I am very certain that I heard the window open.

That was an hour ago, and Ethelwyn has not yet come up. I suppose she finds it endurable because her back is to the light. The window-seat is very wide, and even if Roger should be standing out on the piazza hatless all this time the air is as warm as September. I really see no cause for anxiety.



Bless the child, how happy I am over it! Only, somehow, through the happiness, I have a queer little feeling as if I were too old to be lying about and ought to be retiring to some friendly corner shelter somewhere: bound in half calf, perhaps, and slipped into one of my own shelves; Elia could make a place for me—a warm, friendly, comfortable place. I shall never be old to Elia.

LATER YET.

Ethelwyn has just left me. She slipped into the room a little while ago and came up behind me and put her arms around me in her most irresistible fashion.

"You won't send me home just yet, will you?" she said coaxingly. "Not if I promise to be ever and ever so much better? I—I'm sure that I'm going to be. You don't know how well I feel!"

"I inferred that you had taken a sudden change for the better," I answered.

Ethelwyn gave me a little shake and then crept around in front and cuddled down on the floor beside me with her chin on my knee. I lifted her face and tried to look down into it.

"Ethelwyn, child, are you *sure*?" I cried.

She gave me one fleeting glimpse of her radiant eyes, and then buried her face in my dress.

"I—I've been sure all summer," she confessed.

"All *summer*!" I echoed.

The twitching of my skirts evidenced an emphatic nod somewhere down in their folds.

"Yes, I was—from the very first minute; he was so strong and splendid, and—and—knew so much! And—and he *wouldn't* look at me! So then I tried to pretend that I didn't care, and—and—I guess maybe I flirted some to show that I didn't, and it didn't move him one bit, and by and by I couldn't pretend any longer, and—and—you'll think I'm dreadfully silly." The voice ran into a little gasp that might have been either tears or laughter.

"I'll try to stand it, Ethelwyn," I said.

She looked up, and the red was sweeping in floods across her face.

"You know that day I went to Mount Vernon? I—I was glad that you couldn't go, because I knew that you'd think it so silly, but I went—to get—one of those roses. Don't look at me, *please* look at—at that whisk broom over on the side of the dressing-table! That's it—*please* stay so or I can't tell you, and I want to. Do you remember how I came home with it and you teased me, and—I—pretended to be mad because you did it before Roger? But I wasn't a bit—that was just what I wanted; and then, after all, it didn't move him any more than if it had been a piece of ice. You said you thought I'd have to go home if I didn't get better, and I felt like a hypocrite not to tell

you, and I couldn't. And—this is the very worst of it—I—I wrapped the rose in a little note he sent me once and I used to wear it—or, at least, I tore the address off the note because I was always dreadfully afraid I should lose it and somebody pick it up. And then to-day I did, and it was worrying me most to death. I dropped it outside the gate when we went across the road to watch the sunset. And he came a few minutes later for something, but saw we were at dinner and turned away, and then he saw the paper and recognized his own writing, and—and—I guess that's all, Cousin Persis."

The voice trailed into faintness, and I turned. The next moment the bright head was close to my face, and the child was sobbing out her happiness in my arms.

## NOVEMBER 4.

We are walking through rainbows and golden mists and sunset pageants and whatever else in all this dear old world is full of light and magic. Sometimes, to be sure, it is too dazzling for my middle-aged eyes, and I go out to the hills for rest; they are wearing shadow colors now, in the twilight of the year. Yet yesterday—the third of November—I found eleven different varieties of flowers braving the cold, and the dandelions down in Mrs. Bassett's grass—though close-buttoned down to the ground—are yet shining undaunted. As for the city yards—chrysanthemums and roses and pansies have shown no sign yet of acknowledging bedtime. It is curious how nature herself seems to catch the stress of life in crowded ways, and keeps latest hours in the city. But out here, in spite of the courageous laggards, nature is growing sleepy. The summer birds have gone and the regular residents have fallen to silence—all except the English sparrows, who never heard of silence, and my little Carolina wren, whose clear, ringing call seems the very spirit of these sharp and stinging mornings. I caught Mrs. Bassett stalking him yesterday. He was somewhere on an old brush-heap, and she crept closer and closer, her eyes sparkling with delight. She gave it up at last and stood just listening, her cap over one ear and her little, wrinkled face all alight. When she heard my step she looked back, smiling.

"I knowed you'd be out, dearie," she said, "you was just bound to, with things calling so. Ain't it nice to be alive? I s'pose," she added quaintly, "'twill be full as nice to be dead when we come to that, only it seems as if 'twould take a while to get used to the golden streets and all after you've loved dirt roads so long. But I guess that will be fixed all right when we get to it."

She stood thoughtful a moment, smiling into the golden west, as if between her and it some high secret passed. Not even Ethelwyn's face, with the light of her "new heaven and earth" upon it, was ever more joyous. Oh, what a beautiful world it is, where such things can be!

# THE LOVE OF DENYS DE VAUDRENCŒUR

*By Beulah Marie Dix*

*Author of "Hugh Gwyeth," "Soldier Rigdale," "The Making of Christopher Ferringham," etc.*



ONE springtime, early in the eighteenth century, when the village of Glanby was a frontier town, the Sieur de Vaudrencœur came a-foraying down the Connecticut River. He had but a small party under his command, some thirty savages, Macquas and Abenakis, and one Frenchman, his half-brother, Denys de Vaudrencœur. Denys was almost seventeen, a man and of marriageable age according to Canadian standards, which were all the standards he had ever known. By New England standards he was no more than a pretty, slender boy.

At the Long Plains, ten miles above Glanby, the war party separated. The Sieur de Vaudrencœur, with the most of his Indians, struck eastward to attack the hamlet of Newfield, while Denys, with three Macquas, was left to guard the packs. Denys chafed a little at this disposition of the forces. He had undergone the hardships of the march from Canada, and now, on this, his first foray, he wanted a hand in the actual fighting. But the habit of obedience was strong in him. All his life he had submitted to the varying tyrannies of a dozen older brothers. Though he murmured at his leader's decision, he murmured under his breath, and in the end stayed meekly behind with his Macquas.

The Macquas speedily slipped off to do a little hunting of their own, and Denys grew lonesome. In the search for amusement, boy-like, he prowled about in the bushes till his prowling landed him in the beaten roadway that ran from Glanby to Newfield. It was just at that moment that two Glanby men, Elnathan Hoyt and Hezekiah Weeks, came riding peacefully up the road. Denys and the Glanby men spied each other at the same instant. In time of war there was but one form of greeting between the French and English of the border, and Denys's Indian dress betrayed his nationality. The three guns cracked almost simultaneously. Then the Glanby men, far too experienced fighters to be foolhardy, wheeled their horses and, in the

deadly fear of an ambuscade, galloped for home. Denys lay in the roadway where he had fallen, with a musket-ball in his shoulder and another in his thigh.

There his Macquas found him when they crept up, drawn by the noise of the firing. They bandaged his hurts in hastiest fashion and started to carry him with them on their retreat. But the dread of pursuit grew upon them, and Denys, helpless and unconscious, retarded their flight. They abandoned him in a thick growth of pines, and weeks later gave the Sieur de Vaudrencœur a circumstantial account of how Denys had fallen in a hot skirmish and died in their arms.

Far from dying, Denys recovered consciousness, there among the pines. He called his Indians by name, begging for a draught of water, but he got no answer. Very slowly he realized that they had run away and left him to perish alone. A delicately nurtured youth would no doubt have resigned himself and perished, but Denys, for all his slender prettiness, came of hardy stock. To lie still and die was beyond him. He dragged himself along the ground till he came to a spring and, having drunk, he felt the strength to crawl on, though he scarcely knew why or whither. He did not dream of reaching Canada, crippled as he was, and he could not decide whether or no he wished to reach an English settlement. The treatment he had seen meted out to English captives in Canada was not such as to encourage him to yield himself a prisoner. The English might give him to their Indian allies to torture, might even torture him themselves. His half-brother, Armand, who was a priest, had told him many shocking things of the heretics.

Still, Denys staggered on, and his uncertain course was mainly southward. There were blank periods of unconsciousness in which he lay wherever he chanced to fall, and wild times of delirium in which the stars went dazzling down the sky above him and he sang as he walked. He chewed the young leaves that were bursting on the trees and he drank of the springs, and somehow he kept life in him till the fourth morning broke. Then he found himself in the meadows north of Glanby. A ploughed field stretched before him, and far away he saw the sunlight on the roofs of the village. All the old dread of the heretic foe came over him. He dropped down between two furrows of the field with his face to the sky, and he prayed to the Virgin that he might die quickly ere the Englishmen discovered him.

By an odd chance it was Elnathan Hoyt who found Denys. He came early to his field, with his gun on his shoulder and a wary eye about him for savages. So intent was he on the thicket at the edge of the field that he did not spy Denys till he almost stumbled over him.

Denys turned his head feebly where he lay in the soft dirt. "Je

me rends, M'sieu," he muttered, with appealing eyes, and lost consciousness.

A practical man and the father of eight sons, Hoyt picked up the French boy and carried him into Glanby. "As long as I shot him, I calculate I ought to take care of him," he explained to his interested neighbors.

So Denys was put to bed at Hoyt's house, and Hoyt and his family tended him as carefully as if he were of their own blood. Denys was very patient and submissive under all their ministrations, but his eyes watched everything that went on about him with the alert terror of a trapped wood-creature. He had small faith in heretics.

But among Hoyt's children was a daughter, Eunice, a tall, white-skinned, red-haired girl of one-and-twenty. She had the temper that went with her bright hair, as her brothers knew to their cost, but she had also the instinct of motherhood. To that instinct the captive French boy, with his shyness and his palpable terror, that he tried hard to master, appealed irresistibly. She soothed and petted him quite as if he were one of her younger brothers, and Denys, laying aside his suspicions of this one heretic, fell madly in love with her. It mattered nothing to him that he was not yet seventeen while Eunice was one-and-twenty. He considered her the only adorable woman in the world, and, as soon as he had learned from her a smattering of the English tongue, he told her so. As his knowledge of the language increased, he repeated his declaration with more and more fluency and fervor, but Eunice invariably told him not to be silly, in an elderly tone that chilled him. For there was a neighbor's son, Simeon Barnard, whom she loved and whom she was to marry.

Still, Denys would not give up hope. Somehow, spite of Simeon Barnard, he, he himself, would win and wed the adorable Eunice, yes, and stay there with her in Glanby the rest of his days. For, from a state of suspicious acquiescence in his captivity, Denys had come slowly to find contentment in the life of Glanby. Now that the haunting fear of a painful death was taken from him, he decided that, point for point, he received better treatment from Hoyt than he had received from his own overbearing brothers. And Hoyt's sons, though given to horse-play that Denys at the first could scarcely understand, were in the main friendly youths—and they were Eunice's brothers. After all, Glanby was as pleasant an abiding place as the rude Château de Vaudrencœur.

Moreover, Denys had good precedent in changing his allegiance. Again and again had his brother, the priest, told him, with proper horror, of French renegades who, taken captive, had renounced their religion and settled down among the New England heretics. Six months before Denys had shuddered to hear of such iniquity, but now

he found himself secretly applauding the wisdom of his renegade compatriots. No doubt they too had seen and loved some daughter of the Puritans. And where they had succeeded in their suits, might not another succeed?

By the time that autumn came Denys, in the cast homespuns of the young Hoyts that had replaced his Indian clothes, made one boy more at Elnathan Hoyt's harvesting. He was trying hard to win the good opinion of Hoyt, of all Glanby, and, indeed, the men of Glanby, never so suspicious of Denys as he had been of them, accorded him a somewhat contemptuous liking. Hezekiah Weeks, to be sure, said that all Frenchmen were treacherous Papists and Hoyt was a fool to trust such a glib-spoken young rascal as Denys, but Weeks with his grumbling represented only a small minority. Glanby at large tolerated Denys, and Hoyt treated him quite as if he were one of his own boys, and Eunice was rather more considerate of him than of her brothers, so Denys's hopes were high.

But while he made his pretty, boyish schemes, his captors, quite regardless of his plans, were sending messages about him from Glanby to Boston and from Boston to Quebec. The end did not come till the bare, leafless months of winter. Then one day Hoyt told Denys, in evident expectation that the boy would be pleased, that in a month's time he would be restored to his own people. It had been agreed that he should be exchanged for Ezra Sutcliffe, captured from Glanby two years before, and he was to be sent back to Canada at once.

"But I desire not to return," cried Denys, heart-broken. "You are all friends to me. It is my intention to remain with you forever."

His desire, he found, had very little to do with the progress of events. Hoyt was puzzled,—indeed, was rather sorry for the boy's unfeigned distress,—but Hoyt and all Glanby preferred to have Ezra Sutcliffe rather than Denys de Vaudrencœur. Like it or not, Denys had to pack up his few belongings and say farewell to Glanby.

On the morning of his departure he lingered to bid Eunice good-by. She was hemming linen sheets against her marriage, which was near at hand, but she laid by her work for a moment, and with her old maternal habit gave Denys good advice about keeping his throat well wrapped up. But there the misery in the boy's eyes touched her, and she kissed him good-by ere she hurried back to her wedding-sewing. As for Denys, being of Celtic temperament, he went away weeping openly and unashamed.

A month later, after a hard passage through the northern woods, Elnathan Hoyt, the chief of the expedition, delivered Denys over to the commandant at Chambly. From there Denys was sent down the river, and he reached his brother's château, as one risen from the dead, just a full year from the time he quitted it.

The Seigneur his brother did not receive him back with unmixed gratification. "Had you no better courage than to let yourself be taken alive by our enemies?" he complained. "Here we must yield up one of them to redeem you, miserable!"

The Sieur de Vaudrencœur, however, lithe leader of many forays, said consolingly that Denys, if he had kept his wits about him, must have learned enough of the defences of Glanby to compensate his countrymen for the loss of Ezra Sutcliffe.

But Denys's brother Armand, the priest, said sorrowfully that nothing could compensate for the possible loss of Denys's soul. He was grievously alarmed by Denys's new indifference in matters of the faith; indeed, he thought it well that Denys marry at once, marry a true believer who would hold him firmly bound to Mother Church.

The Seigneur was of the same opinion. The Canadian government in those days gave a bounty for large families, and it was high time that Denys set about winning the bounty. He was rising eighteen, and there was little Fanchette Kermadon——

"I do not fancy black-haired women," cried Denys, with sudden spirit.

A scene followed, so alarming that it was handed down in the traditions of the De Vaudrencœur family. The outcome of it was that Denys snatched up his gun and ran out of the house. He joined a party of voyageurs which was going up the river to the Lakes, and it was eight months before his brothers saw him again.

When Denys judged that the storm had blown over, he ventured back to the château. He was amazed at the kindness of his reception. The truth was that the Sieur de Vaudrencœur was going southward on a glorious expedition. He would have under his command three hundred Indians and half-bloods and a dozen Frenchmen, and he looked to inflict a heavy blow on the English frontier. Denys could help him. For it was at Glanby that he meant to strike, and Denys knew the Glanby country.

At first Denys refused flatly. His various brothers coaxed and threatened. The Seigneur denounced him as a traitor to the King, and Armand the priest lamented him as a soul lost to the Church; but all was useless. In the end it was the sentence with which the Sieur de Vaudrencœur gave up the struggle that decided Denys.

"As thou wilt, little one," the Sieur de Vaudrencœur had said. "Whether thou art with us or not, we shall burn Glanby."

Denys thought over that saying in the night watches. It was very true. He was not the only man in Canada who knew the country round Glanby. The village and his friends within it were doomed—unless they were warned. Next morning Denys sought his brother.

"I have thought again. I will go with you," he said.

All the long march through the wintry forests he thought of the final scene that was before him. At times his hope was high. Somehow, the good God aiding, he would slip before his comrades, he would steal into the settlement ahead of them. In Indian warfare discovery always means defeat. The Glanby men, once warned, would spring to arms, and the settlement would be saved. And it was he who would have saved it. There would be no question of sending him back to Canada again. He would stay in Glanby the rest of his life, and Eunice—even to himself he would not admit that she was doubtless Eunice Barnard now. He thought of her as he had known her, desirable, adorable, the woman whom he yet would win.

But as the march went on these high hopes died in him. The *Sieur de Vaudrencœur* sent forward Indian scouts whom Denys could not dream of passing. There were scores of men about him, and tried forayers too. Slowly Denys came to realize his helplessness, and then the full horror of the situation grew upon him. That he, of all men, should witness the destruction of the town, the massacre of his English friends! Night after night the scene painted itself upon his dreams. He saw Eunice—and he woke shuddering in the dark to remember how he had seen her.

On the last nights there was no sleep for him. Wide-eyed, white-faced, he stumbled along in the van of the column. All the boy's pretty plans of the beginning of the journey were at an end. It was a man now who weighed the chances coolly: if the settlement were warned at all, it must be at the price of his own life. And the price was worth the paying, for Eunice's sake.

As on that earlier foray, the invaders left their packs at the Long Plains. All day they lurked in the white woods, and at evenfall set forward across the snow towards Glanby. There was no moon to betray them, but, to their disadvantage, the night was very still.

"But the pigs of heretics sleep sound!" muttered the *Sieur de Vaudrencœur*.

Denys, struggling along at his brother's side, made no answer, but he grasped his gun firmly. It would take but a second to swing it to his shoulder when the time came.

The meadows to the north of Glanby lay white before them, and overhead the quiet stars shone on the white roofs of the village.

"There, on the west side, you can enter the town easiest," Denys whispered recklessly. "Let me go first."

With his brother and two of the Abenaki scouts he stole forward at the head of the long file. Already his fingers were on the trigger of his gun. Clearer and clearer the snowy line of the roofs of Glanby showed against the black sky. The column was midway of the meadows. The time had come. Denys caught the gun to his shoulder.



Out of the corner of his eye the *Sieur de Vaudrencœur* saw, and swung up his hand with his pistol clubbed. Simultaneously with his movement came the flash of Denys's gun. The shot went rattling out through the dark.

Mad with disappointment, the *Sieur de Vaudrencœur* swung the pistol about in his hand and fired squarely at Denys's breast. Denys dropped in the snow, but the shot that struck him down sent a second warning note through the night. Before De Vaudrencœur and his savages could cover the few rods that still lay between them and the village half the men of Glanby had risen and barricaded their houses.

Even as it was, cruel work was done that night in Glanby. Years afterwards men still spoke with hushed voices of the great December massacre. When morning came twelve houses were in ruins and twenty of the Glanby folk lay dead among them, while more than two score were being hurried away across the snows to Canada.

Elnathan Hoyt, with his sons, who made a garrison in themselves, had beaten off the savages from his house, and he joined the reinforcements from down the river who followed the invaders out into the meadows. There a sharp battle was fought with the *Sieur de Vaudrencœur's* rear-guard, but in prudence the Englishmen hesitated at following into the woods, and fell slowly back upon Glanby. In the white meadows men were lying; some were Englishmen, slain or wounded in the last fight, and some were Indians, for so hot had been the struggle that the savages had not been able to bear away their dead. The Glanby men halted to seek and rescue their wounded.

Then Hezekiah Weeks raised a sudden cry: "Hoyt! Elnathan Hoyt! Come you here! As I'm a Christian man, 'tis your Denys, the black-hearted devil! Did I not warn ye? 'Tis he has brought the savages down upon us."

Every man in the meadows ran to the spot, but Elnathan Hoyt was first. Denys lay on his back in the snow where he had fallen. He was conscious, for his eyes opened heavily at the sound of the rushing footsteps, but his hunting-shirt was stiff with blood and his face was gray. He was dying, but on that dreary morning the Glanby men could feel for him no more compassion than they would have felt for a scotched snake.

"He's trying to say something," Ezra Sutcliffe spoke coldly. "Reckon he knows you, Hoyt."

Hoyt, with his face lined and seamed, hesitated a moment, then he knelt down in the snow by Denys, but he did not touch him.

Denys caught his breath with piteous choking. "Eunice," he whispered, and whispered the word twice ere Hoyt understood. "Is she—safe?"

Hoyt laid the words upon him as if they were so many blows: "She is dead, slain in her house, slain by your savages, and her baby with her. You can thank your Popish saints for the good work you've done."

He rose to his feet. "We've our men to look to," he said. "Ay, and our dead to bury." He walked away, and the other men followed him.

Only Asaph Hoyt, a boy of Denys's own years, who in the old times had shared his bed with Denys, lingered a moment, and whipping his water-bottle from under his coat laid it shamefacedly with reach of Denys's hand.

But when the men came back that way an hour later, the water was untouched and Denys de Vaudrenceur lay dead.



## TRAIL SONG

BY FRANK FARRINGTON

**H**ERE'S out on the open trail, my lass,  
With a heart for rain or shine!  
Here's out to race with wind in the face,  
To roam and rove at the wilding pace  
Where the weather thrills like wine!

We'll follow the wind of the way, my lass,  
Where it chases a truant stream.  
We'll loaf along with a vagrant song,  
With the glow of life all thrilling strong  
And the future a vibrant dream.

For what's a day or a year, my lass,  
But time for finding joy?  
We've naught to do, we crony two,  
With the Ship of Worry's crafty crew,  
We're free from all annoy.

Then here's a song, a song, my lass,  
A song for the open trail!  
We're off to seek the crimson streak  
That's sunk behind West Mountain's peak,  
And to drink from Freedom's grail.

# AT FIDDLER'S BRIDGE

*By Ella Middleton Tybout*



"**A**N' jes' at midnight at de full o' de moon yo' kin hyah de fiddle chunin' up, and ef yo' goes tuh de aidge o' de bridge an' draps a piece o' silvah intuh de watah (ten cents'll do), and sez 'Come fo'th, John Thompson,' sho's yo' bawn, chile, out he come an' plays. Dat's huccum de place tuh be called Fiddlah's Bridge."

Mrs. Bostwick held out her hand hospitably to replenish the cup of her guest, the Rev. Kinnard Brice, who shook his head doubtfully as he replied,—

"I sho'ly am 'stonished, Sistah Bos'wick, dat a lady o' yo' refinery should b'lieve in ghosesses."

Mrs. Bostwick bridled at the delicate flattery conveyed in this speech, but stuck to her point.

"It am a fac'," she repeated solemnly. "My boy Mose's yallah gal Jinny done hyah it wunst when she was comin' f'om de Big Quarterly, an' it skeert huh so bad she ain't been hyah sence. I suttently hates tuh live so close, but dey ain't no help fuh it, so I jes' stays in de house at sech times ez I think ole John Thompson's roun'. Ain't yo' g'wine tuh have no mo' dis cawn pone, Bro' Brice? I done made it speshul fuh yo'."

"I'se b'liged tuh yo', Sistah, but I'se had 'nuff fuh de present. I'se been studyin' yo' wo'des, Sistah Bos'wick, an' I'se done come tuh de seclusion dat it's meh juty tuh p'int out tuh yo' fuh sho' dat dey ain't no sperrits down tuh de bridge. I'se g'wine tu stop hyah on meh way f'om Camp dis evenin', an' yo' an' me'll go down tuh de watah. Ef deys anythin' dah 'tain't g'wine tuh huht us,—me bein' sanctified anyhow and yo' havin' jes' 'sperienced 'ligion down tuh de Buck, an' ef he shows hisself I'll 'zort wid him an' lay him low."

Mrs. Bostwick accepted this handsome offer somewhat reluctantly. She was honestly afraid to go to the bridge after nightfall, but under the circumstances did not see her way clear to refuse, stipulating, however, that her husband should not be told of the proposed expedition, he having frequently ridiculed her fears of the old fiddler and announced that he would not object to sitting on the bridge all night if necessary.

She watched the long, lank figure of the preacher disappear over

the hill, then went into the house, where she encountered her husband, who was carefully depositing something on the table.

"Dannel Bos'wick," she demanded sternly, "whuh yo' git dat watahmillion? Yo' didn't hab no money. Don't yo' fotch no stolen millions intuh dis house. Does yo' hyah me talkin'? Whuh yo' git it?"

Receiving no reply to this inquiry, she approached the table and tapped the melon inquiringly with her thumb and finger.

"Hit's mighty ripe," she murmured; "seems like a pity tuh let it go tuh was'e. Don't yo' tell me yo' stole it, Dannel, caze I ain't g'wine tuh b'lieve no sech thing. Yo' ain't got 'ligion; yo' picks de banjo, an' yo' plays de 'cordeen, but yo' didn't steal no watahmillion; I knows dat. Git de knife, honey, quick, an' let's begin."

"Rachel," ventured Daniel, when the feast was nearing completion and nothing but a large pile of rinds remained to tell the tale, "Rachel, was yo' washin' up tuh de big house tuh day?"

"Yaas," said Mrs. Bostwick, ejecting melon-seeds as she spoke, "I was."

"Whut yo' fotch home?"

"Dannel," said Mrs. Bostwick righteously, "I fotch nothin' home. Does yo' think I'se g'wine tuh take whut don't b'long tuh me jes' caze yo' likes tuh set an' stuff yo'seff? I'se 'feared Bro' Brice am right, Dannel, an' yo'se mighty onregin'rit."

Daniel sighed. Life was not so pleasant since Rachel had got religion some two weeks ago, and had, as it were, renounced the world, the flesh, and the devil. Formerly when she went to the big house to do the weekly washing, her ample proportions were covered by voluminous skirts containing many and deep pockets, one of which, indeed, was ingeniously lined with rubber cloth and could be trusted to carry milk and other liquids with perfect safety. No wonder Daniel thought regretfully of the evening meal as it used to be.

"Dannel," said Rachel, a little later, "whuh yo' g'wine?"

He reached for his accordion in provoking silence, whereat Rachel's wrath arose.

"Yo' ain't g'wine tuh pick no banjo, nuh play no 'cordeen in dis yere house," she announced. "Some o' dese days, Dannel, yo'se g'wine tuh see de wo'de 'Sin' in lettahs of fiah right 'crost dat 'cordeen. Den yo'se g'wine tuh be skeert tuh daith, an' yo' sperrit'll be ez oneasy ez ole John Thompson's."

"Laws, Rachel," said Daniel, "t'ain't no hahm tuh play de 'cordeen. Ever sence yo' went tuh de Buck yo'se jes' so biggoty deys no gittin' 'long wid yo' nohow. Yo' got no eyes fuh nobody but ole Kinnard Brice, an' he don't do nothin' but traipse roun' de kentry an' eat oddah folks' vittles. I ain't got no use fuh him nohow."

"Hesh, Dannel," said Rachel. "Bro' Brice done been sanctified, an' he's a preachah o' de wo'de o' de Lawd. He 'lows he kin lay de sperrit o' ole John Thompson low, an' it takes a mighty holy pussen tuh do dat. I ain't g'wine tuh set by an' hyah yo' scarifyin' him wid yo' mouf."

"Huh," said Daniel scornfully, "who's 'feared o' ole John Thompson anyhow? Reckon ef he wants tuh play he fiddle he's g'wine tuh do it 'thout no for'n interfluence f'om sech as Kinnard Brice. Now I'se g'wine out, an' I don't feel no call tuh tell yo' whuh I'se g'wine nuthah."

So saying, Daniel and his accordion departed, leaving the wife of his bosom to amuse herself as best she might until her escort should appear.

The superstitions of her race rose strong within Mrs. Bostwick as the hours passed and she sat and waited. The moon climbed higher in the heavens and shone as only the August moon knows how to shine. The silence deepened, broken solely by the chirp of a cricket or an occasional chorus of frogs from the stream at the foot of the hill, and the heart of the watcher grew faint within her as midnight approached.

"Swing low, sweet chariot,  
Swing low, sweet chariot,  
G'wine fuh tuh carry me home."

The familiar words, at first heard but faintly, gradually grew more distinct, and as the figure of Brother Brice appeared Mrs. Bostwick arose from the doorstep and, opening her mouth to its widest extent, joined loudly in the refrain,—

"G'wine fuh tuh carry me home."

"Is yo' ready, Sistah?" inquired the pastor.

He was an imposing figure to look upon, being clad in the gown in which he delivered his sermons. In its palmy days it was said to have been a gentleman's dressing-gown, but its present owner had dedicated it to the pulpit. Set well on the back of his head was a much rubbed and rusty silk hat.

"Is yo' ready, Sistah?" he repeated.

"Yaas, Bro' Brice, I'se ready," she replied reluctantly. "I sees yo'se got yo' gown on, Bruddah."

"Yaas, Sistah. Dis yere's a mighty solemn 'casion, an' so I'se got meh gown. I'se g'wine down tuh de aidge o' de watah wid yo' an' he'p yo' tuh cas' out de debbil wuckin' inside yo' dat makes yo' b'lieve in sperrits; it's time we was stahtin'."

"Has yo' got ten cents?" inquired Mrs. Bostwick, seeing a possible

loophole of escape. "'Tain't no mannah o' use tuh go down dah 'thout some silvah tuh drap intuh de watah."

Brother Brice had not; he said he rarely carried so much with him, as he did not consider it safe. This was an unforeseen complication.

"Hain't yo' got de mattah o' ten cents no whuh, Sistah Bos'wick?" he inquired plaintively. "Yo' mus' a-got paid fuh yo' day's wuck."

Mrs. Bostwick replied that she had a quarter, which she considered too much to waste, but not ten cents, and then produced a cracked china teacup.

"Dis yere ain't de time tuh higgle ovah money," said Brother Brice reprovingly, as he deftly extracted four quarters from the cup, three of which he consigned to his pocket while the lady looked on helpless. "Yo'll take dis quahtah in yo' han's, Sistah, an' drap it in de watah. De oddah t'ree yo' owes tuh de Lawd.

"Whut yo' wants, Sistah Bos'wick," he resumed, as they started slowly down the hill, "whut yo' wants is *con'imence*. I has *con'imence* dat de Lawd's gwine tuh take keer o' me, an' I gits all I wants. Many a mo'nin' I dunno whuh I'se g'wine tuh git meh dinnah nuh meh suppah, but I has *con'imence*, an' it's suah tuh come somehow."

"Yaas, Bruddah," said Mrs. Bostwick dutifully.

Meanwhile Daniel had spent the evening playing the accordion to a select party of friends in the village of St. Georges (known as "Sin'goges"), and it was quite eleven o'clock before he started home. Having a long distance to walk, he decided to take a short cut across the fields. He was feeling moderately happy, his friends having expressed their appreciation of his playing by sundry glasses of apple-jack, which Daniel was wont to say brought music to his heart and skill to his fingers. So he went cheerfully and swiftly along until he approached the region of Fiddler's Bridge.

Here he reduced his speed and looked apprehensively about. He was no coward, and when safe at home had often been heard to laugh loudly at those who feared the spirit of the murdered fiddler, but it took a brave man to cross that bridge after ten or eleven o'clock, and Daniel knew it must be nearing midnight.

At last a brilliant idea occurred to him; he would not have to go over the bridge at all. Farther down the stream were stones which might, in an emergency, be used as stepping-stones; he would go that way, since cross he must to reach home. The water was not deep; if he fell in, he could easily wade out again.

"I ain't g'wine tuh look t'odes de bridge nohow," he muttered, "an' den even ef ole John Thompson is a-walkin' I won't see him."

Daniel took his courage in both hands as he slowly made his way through the tangle of briers that bordered the stream. The

road was obscured by the bushes and thick festoons of wild grape-vines which hung from the trees, filling the night air with fragrance.

A dry twig snapped loudly as he stepped upon it.

"'Pears like I can't go 'cross nohow," he gasped, wiping the perspiration from his brow.

Suddenly he remembered his accordion, and opening it began to play softly to give himself courage. Still playing, he started over the stepping-stones with his head turned resolutely away from the bridge. Just as he reached the middle of the stream he heard a loud splash, as of a heavy body striking the water. Involuntarily he turned his head; plainly visible in the moonlight were the white walls on each side of the bridge, and the road leading up the hill; also clearly to be seen was a man running up that road with a truly remarkable speed. But what was that rising out of the water in the shadow of the bridge? Daniel's blood fairly congealed as he stood poised on the slippery stone and watched a large, dark figure rise from the water. It moved. It stood erect, and, turning slowly, faced him.

Flesh and blood could stand no more. Daniel cast his cherished accordion wildly from him and started to flee, but, unfortunately, slipped on the wet stone and precipitated himself full length in the stream. In the water, where old John Thompson reigned supreme, what might not happen to him? With chattering teeth and trembling limbs he managed to crawl to the bank, then, without pausing to look behind him, started for home at the top of his speed.

"Does yo' feel grace a-swellin' in yo' buzzom, Sistah?" inquired Brother Brice as they slowly approached the bridge.

Mrs. Bostwick did not reply, speech having for the time deserted her, and they went on in silence.

They stood for a moment on the bridge casting apprehensive glances down the stream, which shone beneath them like a silver ribbon, with dark shadows in places, and groups of sleepy water-lilies whose leaves glistened in the moonlight.

"Is yo' 'feared, Sistah?" whispered Brother Brice rather faintly. "I ain't g'wine tuh make yo' do nothin' ag'in' yo' will. Ef yo' po' shrinkin' haht's a-failin' yo' an' yo'se bent an' boun' on tuhnin' home, I'se g'wine wid yo' tuh take keer o' yo'. I ain't g'wine tuh leave yo' to yo'seff nohow."

But Mrs. Bostwick shook her head. She did not intend to be reproached hereafter for putting her hand to the plough and looking back.

"Den, Sistah, have con'imence. Have con'imence on me an' de Lawd, we'se g'wine tuh pull yo' thro'. 'Come close tuh de side o' de bridge, Sistah."

Approaching the low railing, they looked over. The water was not far below, and to their excited imagination seemed to quiver strangely.

"Projec' yo' body clean ovah de railin', Sistah," was the next command, "so's we kin see undah de bridge."

Obediently she leaned over as far as possible, his hand resting upon her shoulder, evidently meant to inspire confidence, but very cold and trembling violently.

"W—what I got tuh say?" he whispered.

"'Come fo'th, John Thompson,'" she replied in trembling accents.

"Drap yo' quahtah," he said.

The bit of silver flashed in the moonlight and fell into the water, making widening circles.

"Come fo'th, J—John T—T—Thompson," he called, beginning loudly and boldly, but ending with a faint quaver.

Very softly on the night air came the sound of music. Too petrified to move, they remained leaning far over the railing, looking and listening. The music grew louder; then some distance below the bridge but quite distinct and plainly visible appeared the figure of a man, moving slowly and playing upon some instrument.

The tongue of the Rev. Kinnard, becoming parched and dry, clove to the roof of his mouth as he tried in vain to speak. He grew giddy and clutched his companion for support; he felt himself slipping; in another moment he would be in the water. Rallying all his strength, he clung to the stout shoulder beside him and pulled himself up by it, then, suddenly and violently pushing it from him, turned and fled up the road. A splashing sound, as of something falling into the water, pursued him, and had he paused to look back he would have seen that the bridge stood alone and unoccupied in the moonlight. But he did not pause.

"Lawd ha' mercy," groaned Mrs. Bostwick as she struck the water.

To her intense surprise, she was not immediately seized and drawn down by the avenging ghost of John Thompson, nor did she hear the voice of Brother Brice quelling the evil spirit. Instead, swiftly flying footsteps were distinctly audible, growing rapidly fainter. Mrs. Bostwick struggled to her feet and looked up the road.

"Humph!" she ejaculated.

The discomfort of her present condition and the difficulty of getting on dry land seemed to overcome her fear, so she looked boldly down the stream. The spirit had disappeared, but a dusky figure could be seen scrambling wildly up the bank and vanishing in the bushes. There was a light triangular patch on the seat of the dark trousers which looked strangely familiar to Mrs. Bostwick.



Wading wearily along, the water up to her shoulders and occasionally filling her ears, she encountered a hard object floating towards her. It proved to be an accordion.

"'Pears like I'se saw dis afore," she muttered.

Two dripping figures met on the threshold of the Bostwick homestead.

"Dannel," said one, "huccum yo' tuh git so wet?"

"Well, Rachel," replied the other, "jes' ez I was a-comin' tuh de bridge, I seen a bullfrog a-settin' on de bank a-winkin' at me, an' knowin' yo' was partial tuh frogs' legs I struv' tuh git him fuh yo' brek'-fus', honey, an' so doin' fell intuh de watah. Ain't yo' kinder damp yo'seff, Rachel?"

"Dannel," she replied solemnly, "ez I was a-strollin' by de stream in de moonlight, I seen yo' 'cordeen in de watah, an' in tryin' tuh feesh it out I done got in up tuh meh neck. Dat's all, Dannel."

The following Sunday Brother Brice preached his famous sermon on "Con'innence," taking for a general text the power of the righteous to cast out devils. Mrs. Bostwick, who was present, was observed to sniff scornfully several times, and finally left the church.

Next morning when she prepared to go and do the washing at the big house, Daniel, much to his inward satisfaction, saw her array herself again in the gown of many pockets. She patted the one lined with rubber affectionately.

"I'se g'wine tuh fotch yo' home sumpin' nice fuh yo' suppah, honey," she remarked.



## THE WAYFARER

BY ETHNA CARBERY

**H**E had no crown upon his head  
 When first he met me by the way,  
 His feet upon the thorns had bled,  
 His gown was hodden gray;  
 But in his eyes, stars, moon, and sun  
 Were one.

He came, his empty hands outheld;  
 I gave to him with glad good-will,  
 And since my pitying heart rebelled  
 That he should fare so ill,  
 I took his gold head to my breast  
 For rest.

When lo! his empty hands were piled  
 With all gifts craved in dreams of mine,  
 And over me the pilgrim child  
 Spilled benefits divine:  
 Joy, Heart's-Desire, and Peace most fair  
 Fell there.

For my great pity in his stress  
 Because that sad and bare he went,  
 I now am clad with happiness  
 And rich in sweet content:  
 'Twas Love, the King, who crossed my way  
 To-day.

# A SOVEREIGN REMEDY

*By Francis Willing Wharton*

*Author of "Wild Oats"*



HILLIARD glanced round at the ample comfort of the room, and dropping into a chair by the table took out his note-book and ran over the visits still to be paid. There were three only. He would get back in time to dress for dinner if he felt inclined, an amusement he was not often indulged with. Shutting the book, he leaned back and scrutinized his surroundings.

Books up to the ceiling. Ugh! What a good life some people led! Chairs to read them in that would speed the afternoon in the twinkling of an eye, and a big double glass door opening out on white steps that led to a heavenly garden. He stood up to look down the green alleys and stare at the bright beds,—he loved color, crass color,—and then the door opened at the other side of the room and Mr. Bagehot entered.

They had met before. They shook hands and proceeded at once to business, and, sitting opposite each other, after some talk Mr. Bagehot summed up the case.

"The truth is, Dr. Hilliard,"—he spoke slowly,—“it's just the absence of symptoms that worries me. My daughter, as I tell you, has been thoroughly examined by specialists; she has everything that I can give her,”—he glanced about,—“the house”——he waved his hand——“is run to suit her pleasure; we have a garden-party to-night,—she would have it at night, lanterns, music, and so forth; but with it all she loses steadily day by day. She used to be a plump, round, pink-cheeked little thing, now she looks as though a breath of wind might blow her away. We have travelled, we have done everything, and I come to you as a last hope. I hear you have extraordinary power of diagnosis; I beg that you will exert your faculty to the utmost. I have not told her of your visit, but she is in the house. Shall I call her?”

Hilliard hesitated a moment. “Mr. Bagehot,” he answered, “in cases like this I would much rather see the person when not made conscious by acknowledged scrutiny. Will you give me the opportunity of meeting her socially and let me judge of her when she is not prepared?”

"There is something in that idea," responded the older man slowly; "it is always difficult to get a just impression of anyone who is made self-conscious beforehand. Why do you not come to-night? She will suspect nothing."

"Excellent!" Hilliard rose. "You say that Dr. Young sounded her lungs and Carter her heart?"

Mr. Bagehot nodded.

The young man took up his hat. "I will then go." He bowed. "I had expected to pay two visits this evening. I must get them in this afternoon, so if you will excuse me——"

The older man also rose and went to the door with him. "At what hour is your affair?" The Doctor stopped in the hall.

"Eight-thirty—nine—whenever you like," and they bowed and parted.

It was a warm night in May; there must have been a garden somewhere in the neighborhood, for a waft of scent came in the open window. Hilliard shut with a bang a musty book he had been reading and, springing to his feet, stretched his long arms.

"Ho for a night in the gay world!" he said to himself with the sardonic smile with which he viewed human weakness in himself as in others, a smile with which, however, he did not favor his patients, and then he proceeded to dress.

Being intensely practical, orderly, and hard-working, he usually allowed himself very little time for "gew-gaws," as he called clothes, and "flummery," as he called society, but he had a passion for the sensuous side of life which he recognized and held in check.

To take a bath and shave at eight o'clock at night, to spend time over the brushing of his too curly black hair, to put on his dress clothes, adjust a flower in his button-hole—this filled an hour of extreme luxury and enjoyment, and he gave another of his contemptuous grins as he stared at himself in the glass.

He had studied women exhaustively as patients, as women he had avoided them carefully since his college days, when he had discovered his ready appreciation of their power. Through the force of a conscience which he kept studiously concealed, and an ambition in which he gloried, he had succeeded in letting them signify alone.

It was not the women he looked forward to even now, it was the garden, the lights among the trees, the music; he knew what easy enchantment these things could work on him, and he felt like a school-boy on a lark.

With his light overcoat over his arm he strolled along till he reached Mr. Bagehot's great house, which loomed in the quiet street like a Florentine palace, and, entering the door, he already caught sounds of

the music from the garden. He gave his coat and hat to a servant and, advancing through the people, who seemed, some of them, at least, to prefer the house, he sought his host. He heard some woman whose voice was not as low as she supposed ask, "Who is that black-haired man who looks like a Jew?" but he was used to that, and reaching Mr. Bagehot at this moment he shook hands with him.

His host glanced into the young man's face and could not help feeling inwardly discouraged. "She won't come out to this muddyskinned, hook-nosed fellow," he thought; "she will set him down hard and talk to someone else. However, it can't be helped; it is his own idea," and he looked round for his daughter.

"She's over there, I think," he said, "on the steps leading to the garden; let us go and find her at once."

"By all means," responded Hilliard, and he followed his host until they stopped at the top of the marble steps; a group of people stood laughing and talking there.

"I have asked her to be nice to you," whispered his host nervously. "I told her a confounded lie, and said I knew your family and that you—er—needed friends and acquaintances."

The young man broke into a sudden, hearty laugh. It was a contagious, pleasant sound, and Mr. Bagehot found himself joining with a chuckle. "It's terrible what we will do," he added, and advanced to the young people in front of them.

"Irene," he said, speaking with nervous pomposity, "here is Dr. Hilliard, whom I want you to know. Dr. Hilliard, my daughter."

A little, slender creature disentangled herself from the others and, stepping into the light from the library door, held out her hand.

"How do you do?" she said. "Papa has told me of you and says you want to be amused, so it's very nice of us to be giving a party for you, isn't it? Shall we come inside for a while and see what we look like? and then I'll show you the garden if you like."

They turned together, and she led him to a seat in one of the rooms where a few people strayed about, but there was less noise and distraction; then, seating herself near him, she looked him over with a cool, uninterested scrutiny.

She looked as her father had said, as though a strong wind might blow her away. It was hard to believe she had ever been round and plump, harder still to imagine that little, tired face warm with color. Her eyes had been fair-sized to begin with, a deep blue-gray, but now they stared out on the world, large and bored and rather hard in expression.

"Why are you to be amused?" she began, "I couldn't quite make out, and I was in a hurry dressing, some people had come. Is it just because papa has taken a fancy to you, or what?"

Hilliard leaned back and clasped his dexterous brown fingers about his knee.

"That sounds very nice," he said. "I'm not in the habit of having people take fancies to me, so I particularly like the idea. I suppose it happens to you all the time, doesn't it? Do you get tired after a while?"

She looked at him with the same weary indifference. "You are quite wrong," she responded. "I am not that kind at all. People like the house sometimes and papa sometimes, but me—I am not by the way of inspiring liking."

"Don't you want people to like you?" returned the young man. "I thought all women wanted that, even when they weren't prepared to give anything in return. Now, with you and me, for instance, I should have ignorantly believed that it would have entertained and amused you for me to fall head over heels in love with your blue eyes, or are they gray?" He smiled a curious, quizzical smile that softened the hawk-look in his face. She stared gravely at him without a drop of added color on her cheek.

"That is the most shamelessly flirtatious remark I've heard to-night," she said. "But it's only a sham. You aren't that kind, really. Confess it. I have some instinct, and I'm not nineteen."

Hilliard broke into his unexpectedly merry laugh. "Dear me," he answered, "it's hard to be called down so early in the evening, but if you will have the truth, I am not that way inclined as a rule, and I don't go in for talking to women about their eyes, but yours are—well, they took my fancy."

If I keep at it, he thought, I shall get there.

"You are just the right kind of man to show the garden to, aren't you?" She rose. "You will make the lanterns and music seem not quite wasted, and yet to look at you——" She stuck her small chin up a little with a cool impertinence, and gave a faint smile, the first he had seen.

"To look at me," retorted Hilliard, standing beside her and looking down—a long way down—from his height to the slender, graceful figure, "to look at me you would not say I was the man for a stroll in the moonlight. Quite true, and yet haven't you learned, my dear young lady, that ugly men with sharp eyes and hook noses have ten times the capacity for passion that your handsome, blue-eyed lad can boast?"

Miss Bagehot looked at him with a spark of animation in her eyes. "Learned," she answered. "I haven't had a chance to learn anything in life but how to write notes and fix flowers! Come, we will go outside," and turning abruptly, she led the way into the garden.

Hilliard felt himself sliding off into fairyland. The light streamed

from the windows and lit up the formal walks and box-hedged alleys of the garden, and as they got beyond and walked into the walled fruit-garden there were bright-colored lanterns throwing a rosy tint upon the walks, then later, when they reached the border of the lawn, there was the moon.

"It isn't safe for me to be round loose in all this," said the young man as they entered the English garden with its high wall, the fruit trained against it. "I shall lose my head and bay like a dog. Flowers and lights and the night-time are what I like best in the world and what I never see. My usual evening surroundings are my dusty, overcrowded study or somebody's sick-room, with the light low and voices hushed."

She looked at him steadily, with less indifference, he thought; perhaps it was the lanterns that deceived him. He went on: "If one wants to succeed, one must choose in this life; you can't put your strength into many things. I am ambitious. Well, then, I can't expect to gratify my senses as well. They must be bullied and put in irons if they mutiny. It works very well and it rather amuses one to know one could make a fool of oneself over more than one thing if one liked, and then not to like. I have chosen my work; into that I put my capability for passion. Some day I shall allow myself a wife, and I shall love her most unconscionably."

He was getting there, there was no doubt of it this time; those firmly closing lips were parted a little. Had he thought her tired-looking? It was the absence of the spirit; it had now come. He was silent, looking down at her, making her out. It was Miss Bagehot who spoke.

"So there are people in the world like that, are there?" she said slowly. "I suspected it, but I don't think I ever knew one before."

Hilliard laughed. "We aren't generally loose," he responded; "most of us are shut up." Then added, "You must forgive me for breaking out like this; I don't often do it; I don't know when I have unloaded such personalities on anyone, but as I said before, it's the lights, the flowers, and"—he made her a deep bow—"and your ladyship's eyes." The last words had a note of pure friendliness in them that did what nothing else had done, invaded her white cheek with a faint color.

"You are nice," she said suddenly; "I like you."

He bowed again, and brought his laughing glance to bear on her face. "The compliment is returned."

"Tell me some more things," said the girl. "Let us walk on, and I will give you a picture of such a pretty life: my own. And it's killing me. However, that's only incidental; we all have to go sometime. But to begin with, look once carefully at the garden. I designed the

hanging of every lantern. I have one talent, such a useful one!—for dressing up a garden! I'll show you the whole place," and, walking slowly, they went the circuit of the grounds.

She gave him as they wandered a half-jesting account of the passage of her days, and as they entered a little arbor, also lantern hung, she summed it up contemptuously.

"In fact, papa treats me like an orchid, and I am beginning to believe that I am a rank little weed who would flourish better without the steam heat and prepared earth of the greenhouse. And sometimes I have such a yearning to feel the breath of life blow untempered on me, even though it were fierce and I had to bend before it like my fellows."

"Have you never had a bad time?" Hilliard returned, smiling, but with brows that drew together in something half wonder, half envy.

She considered gravely. "No," she answered, "I don't think I ever have. It's partly because I love so few people; it makes one less vulnerable. I think I started with a heart somewhere," she added, with another of her faint smiles, "but it's—it's—getting atrophied from lack of use. Listen,"—she broke off and held up her hand,—“that is a very nice tune, don't you think? I chose it.” The music filled the little place with its rhythm.

"A waltz, isn't it?" said Hilliard. "I can't dance. I never had time to learn or anyone disposed to teach me, but one feels it in one's head, if one don't know it with one's feet."

"I used to dance a great deal,"—Miss Bagehot shrugged her shoulders,—“but it isn't as good fun as it looks. I'm not strong enough now; I should keel over, I think, before the dance was over.”

"That would depend on your partner, wouldn't it?" responded Hilliard. He had folded his arms on his chest and gazed down into her face with an intent study of it.

"How on my partner?" returned the girl.

"If you liked him enough, you would see the dance through," said Hilliard coolly.

She looked at him. "Perhaps yes, but then I shouldn't."

"Are you incapable of human affection?" he answered, allowing a little of that grimmer smile of his to curve his lips.

"No, I suppose not," she said slowly. "But you are not talking of affection, you mean that queer, mixed-up hallucination we call falling in love. I used to sit ready for it, with round, expectant eyes, when I first went to balls and parties. 'Now for it,' I thought, as each young man approached, 'perhaps it's this one—or this one—or this one,' but it never came off. On the whole, I didn't have a very good chance. I had some proposals but no lovers,—at least, I didn't think they were lovers."

Hilliard smiled. "Poor fellows, they did their best; it's rather hard to hold them so cheap."

She gave a little shake to her head. She had hair whose silvery fairness not even the pink lamps could turn to yellow, fine-spun hair, each thread of it crinkled. "Oh, they liked the house and papa, as I said. Can't you think anyone might like to have papa for a father? But their feelings for me were tolerant and not highly colored."

"You frightened them," said Hilliard slowly. He had forgotten to look at her as a physician, he was thinking of her as a woman. "You aren't very big, but I think you are rather alarming. I know you'd frighten me."

There was a moment's pause. The music deepened its notes; they were very sweet and rather inclined to encourage ill-considered speech. Hilliard felt it and went with the tide. He had a grim sneer inside too; he thought himself a fool for his pains.

"You see," he began gravely, "you are spoiled; you don't know, you don't understand, how difficult it is to ask for things when one hasn't been used to getting them. You always get what you ask for; naturally, your demand is couched in vigorous language; but if you had been thrown down hard by life a few times, it would be different. I speak," he ended with a smile, "from experience."

"Do you?" The girl had slipped down on the bench that ran round the arbor. "Tell me about it." She looked up at him with such charming, eager eyes that he forgot that they had seemed hard to him before.

"Oh, it would take too long," the young man laughed, with half a frown; "till three years ago I never got anything else but knocks; they came right along. They were good for me, they made me tough, but they weren't amusing."

He paused; her eyes led him on.

"It began when I was about seven," he searched his memory. "My father and my mother both died and my grandparents took me; they were kind, but bored, awfully bored. They hadn't a child in the house for thirty years, and it was rather trying. They couldn't remember what a child did, so they gave me food and clothes and a bed, and that was all; they never thought of me in between the fulfilling of those duties. I remember hanging up my stocking one Christmas Eve; the servants had discoursed on Santa Claus. When I looked into it in the morning it was still empty. That was rather a facer, I can remember—it was rather a facer."

"Do you mean," said Miss Bagehot, "that it was quite, quite empty? But that was horrible!"

His eyes rested on her countenance; its dismay surprised him. He laughed.



"It didn't do me any harm, it taught me a lesson." Then, seeing her still distressed eyes, he smiled with a change of expression. "Don't—don't take it so hard," he said gently; "it happened twenty-five years ago, and here I am, healthy and happy and getting to the top of my profession. I won't tell you anything more if you mind it so much. I think it's amusing and instructive. I am explaining to you why your proposals didn't have the clamorous ring you expected."

She leaned back and dropped her eyes. "Go on, please," she said.

"Well," Hilliard resumed, "I was not a success in school somehow. I was always getting into fights because the boys called my clothes names,—I admit they were queer looking,—and they also abused my features. Fights interfered with work. I was expelled at one place. I had fought with six boys in as many days and came out even, three beatings, three successes, but the Head Master lost patience and didn't see it. Then I did get along and at college studied medicine. I hadn't any money to speak of, so I worked as night-clerk in a drug-store to pay for my board and my drinks—I took a good many. Do you mind?" He looked at her with his critical smile plain on his face; he was seeing where she stood, and she felt it.

"It depends," answered Miss Bagehot slowly, "on your age, your companions—on a great many things. Go on."

It was an answer that opened Hilliard's keen eyes very wide; the sarcasm fled from his face, it grew serious.

"I worked pretty hard," he went on, "and tried for honors and missed it; that was a facer too; I minded that even more than the empty stocking. Then I started to practise after a year or two in the hospitals, and I was pretty cocksure of myself, and then—some of my patients died—that's the end—you are never the same man again; after that you believe in God, and never so long as you live do you believe in yourself."

There was another pause; the music had ceased while he was talking and now began again, a crooning air that only faintly stirred the atmosphere.

"Do you understand?" said Hilliard, leaning towards her. "Do you know now why a man stumbles and makes a poor show when he asks a woman to marry him? And the more you care,—the more madly you care,—the duller your words, the humbler your petition. Don't you see?"

Their eyes met. A bright wave of color flooded the slender oval of her face; her lids drooped; she was silent. The music played on; they sat like two statues, the young man's eyes eagerly watching her white, drooped lids, her flushed cheeks, her lips slightly tremulous. The girl clasped her fan tightly, her breath coming quickly. The music stopped; she gave a sigh and then stood up.

"I ought to go back," she said, and without another word led the way through the narrow doorway.

It was Hilliard who talked, disjointedly enough, but still talked, as they walked rather swiftly through the garden. When they reached the wide marble steps they stopped.

"Everyone is getting supper inside," said Miss Bagehot, raising her eyes to his face; "come in." They mounted the steps and stood in the light, warm room.

"I don't think I care for any supper," said Hilliard. "I think I'll say good-night."

She did not offer to shake hands with him, she stood with her eyes on his face.

"Papa won't like it," she returned. "He hates people not to eat in his house—don't go."

Hilliard gave a glance at the crowded room and shook his head. "I couldn't," he said. "Good-night," and without further words he bowed and left her, and as he entered the hall turned and saw her joined by three or four people from the other room. He stood a moment and watched her raise those wide-open, indifferent eyes of hers, but saw that the color still flushed her cheek. Then he found his coat and hat and walked to the door.

"Dr. Hilliard," said Mr. Bagehot's voice.

The young man stopped and turned towards him.

"Won't you come in here a moment," said the older man hurriedly, "just a word." He shut the door behind them. They stood alone in a little breakfast room.

"My daughter—you thought her——" His kind eyes looked eagerly into Hilliard's face?

Hilliard paused a moment; a slight, dark color had mounted to his cheek.

"Your daughter," he said slowly, "suffers only, I think, from the need of one thing—an interest, an emotion. She would be well if she had to bear a great sorrow or a great joy."

Bagehot stared at him. "Your prescription, Doctor," he returned, "is somewhat difficult to administer."

The young man bowed and moved towards the door, then turned on his heel and faced his host.

"May I be presumptuous," he said hurriedly, "and ask if you will permit me to—come again to your delightful house, and this time as a visitor only?"

"I shall always be glad to see you," answered Bagehot absently; "let me see you to the door," and he shut it behind the young man with another, "I shall be delighted; come soon."

# ANTOINE'S LOVES

*By Caroline Ticknor*



## I.

ANTOINE ST. LUKE was supping with the Widow Cassner, and a good supper it was, daintily served and nicely cooked. Everything that the clever little woman did was executed with artistic feeling; and she herself was trim and neat and fair to look upon, with large, dark eyes and beautiful, white teeth.

Antoine admired the pretty little widow tremendously. They had been playfellows in early childhood, and in their youth the best of friends and comrades; and then their paths had stretched apart, or, rather, hers had suddenly diverged, while his had gone on much the same. A solitary, secluded path it was, hemmed in on either side by a wall which his own unsocial spirit had erected.

From his first school-days Antoine's world had been the world of books; he knew no other, nor cared to interest himself in outside explorations. His earliest ambition had been to own a library, and for the attainment of this end he had drudged and striven and denied himself the absolute necessities of ordinary existence.

As time went on he rapidly acquired a taste for unique volumes and rare editions. He hunted in old book-stalls and haunted the musty little shops where curious treasures were apt to be discovered. He hobnobbed with the well-known dealers and learned of them what next to covet.

And now, at forty years of age, he was the proud possessor of a valuable library, and nothing else. His small abode was shabby to the last degree, almost unfurnished. It was no wonder that the tasteful dwelling of pretty Mrs. Cassner seemed a bright paradise of cheer and comfort.

The widow's sitting-room was simple in all its furnishings, but ah, so cosy and attractive; and by the little air-tight stove the plump presiding genius of the place formed a most pleasing picture as she busied herself knitting bright-colored yarns into gay stripes for afghans.

How easily she did things! Yes, and how well! Such muffins, and peach preserve, and potted chicken!

As Antoine sat upon the other side of the small, polished zinc on

which rested the air-tight stove, he became suddenly aware of a strange tugging at his heart-strings. He thought of his own cheerless rooms; his meals hurriedly partaken of at restaurants or boarding-houses, or in the solitude of his apartments; of his own lonely life extending on and on, until it ended in a forlorn old age cheered only by his books.

He had indulged his ruling passion, and now he was beginning to experience, instead of the content which should accompany realized ambition, a consciousness of longing and disappointment.

Had his life's struggle been worth the while? He suddenly began to doubt it.

"What ails you, Antoine, you've hardly said a word since supper?" his vis-a-vis was saying. Her voice was sympathetic; she pitied her old friend's loneliness and grieved over his threadbare clothes and badly-tied cravat. Although his junior by a couple of years, she could not but regard him with an almost motherly interest, he was so young and guileless regarding all worldly wisdom.

She laid aside her knitting and came and stood by Antoine and touched his forehead lightly with her firm, shapely fingers.

"Nothing the matter with your temperature, Antoine," she laughed. "I guess you're only moody or absent-minded."

The touch of her light fingers caused Antoine's heart to beat with great rapidity, and all at once the vision of his cheerless home was supplemented by one in which his charming vis-a-vis became a fixture. And why should not this vision be materialized?

He hesitated. It was a matter of choosing between the two. He knew he could not serve two masters.

The pretty Widow Cassner had a small income which she eked out by putting up preserves and jellies, and by letting her rooms to one or two young ladies. She had worked hard, and her life had not been one of unalloyed ease and enjoyment, though no one would have dreamed so from her bright, cheerful bearing.

What had Antoine to offer?

His books. Ah, they would bring a goodly sum. He knew a score of dealers who longed to gather in his many treasures. If they were sold, he would be able to provide handsomely for any woman of simple tastes.

He suddenly determined to sell his books. He would not let himself pause to consider the cost of such a sacrifice. He was beside the little widow, pouring into her ears an eloquent appeal. His library was at her feet,—“rare prints” and “old editions,” “original boards” and “uncut edges.”

His arm was around her. He begged her to take pity upon his loneliness; to make his cheerless home a heavenly paradise with her bright presence.

The widow hesitated. She had pitied Antoine so many years that the next step was not so difficult to take. His terrible absorption in his books had always been a mighty barrier between them; with that removed, Antoine might prove really companionable.

He poured forth pitiful accounts of his endeavors to cook meals for himself on a wretched oil-stove up in his bedroom. He pictured his attempts to keep the coffee-grounds out of his cup, and his vain efforts to manufacture good oatmeal porridge. And then the widow thought of her own bright amber coffee and well-cooked breakfast food, and her compassion finally triumphed.

## II.

ANTOINE was seated in his library, in his one easy-chair; before him stood a small table on which were spread some of his dearest treasures.

First, his Shakespeare Quarto, that prize which by a lucky chance had fallen to his lot. He turned its leaves with gentle, reverent touch. How many book-lovers had coveted it and had endeavored to get possession of it! He thought of the round price that it would bring, and closed it with a stifled sigh. He took up one of his pet volumes of the early dramatists and ran it through with loving touch. Beside it lay some of his first editions,—Walton, Ruskin, Rossetti; Hazlitt, Keats, and others,—dear to his heart. What a magnificent specimen of printing this little book contained! And where might one procure a finer bit of binding than that which he now held with tender care. Ah, how that set of Chaucer would be snapped up by Wilkinson or Whitely!

He plunged his hands deep in his pockets and whistled gayly and stamped about his rooms and eyed his volumes carelessly, and sought his bed, clinging to the glad vision of the petite and pretty widow, whose light touch upon his forehead had set his heart a-thumping, and whose unrivalled muffins and peach preserve remained fixed in his waking consciousness.

Wrapped in these pleasant thoughts he fell asleep, and dreamed, not of the widow, but of his Shakespeare Quarto.

This was not strange, because, like all his fellow-men, he was a poor, weak creature of habit, who needed to be very much on with the new love before he could be wholly off with the first mistress of his heart.

Antoine had decided upon one line of conduct regarding the sale of his rare volumes. He would not haggle over them, nor suffer the prolonged agony of parting with them one by one; but, having notified the various dealers of his intention, he would accept the largest lump-sum offered him; then let the curtain fall upon one act of his small individual drama.

In the days which ensued Antoine seemed a changed being. He had

emerged from his secluded, introspective life into the lively atmosphere of everyday existence. He turned the key upon his library and passed the musty book-stores and mousing antiquarians without a wavering glance. He accompanied the Widow Cassner to various social gatherings, took short trips into the country, listened to her instructions regarding suitable neckwear and a new style of waistcoats, and forswore heavy, hob-nail boots.

It was with the shrewd Whitely that the bargain was at last concluded. That watchful dealer had long eyed Antoine's books with more than friendly interest, and it was with a quick, triumphant step that he departed from the modest habitation which sheltered so many rare editions.

When he had gone, Antoine stood for a while gazing at the large check which he held in his hand. Then he glanced stealthily about his library, as if afraid to face the many reproachful volumes which peered out at him. His Shakespeare Quarto shrunk visibly away from him; his first edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's "Maid's Tragedy" verily slid far back upon its shelf, as if to escape his notice; his beloved Chaucer already wore an air of cynical aloofness, while his rare Goldsmith looked sullen and reproachful.

Great beads of perspiration stood on Antoine's brow; he took several quick strides about the room; he stared helplessly at his treasured books, now his no longer, and stretched his arms out towards them as in dumb protest. Pausing before his Shakespeare Quarto, he gazed at it in abject misery until his eyes grew moist.

"What foolishness," he exclaimed savagely, turning abruptly on his heel; and, striding from the room, he turned the key upon his volumes and regrets.

Half an hour later he was ensconced beside the pretty widow upon her best plush sofa. He had regained his spirits; he laughed and talked incessantly and made plans for their future. He showed her the check he had received from Whitely and bade her calculate how comfortable they needs must be with this neat sum.

The little widow watched him with mingled admiration and anxiety. Antoine had never seemed to care at all for money, how then should he be so elated by its possession. She flattered herself that Antoine's love for her had wrought this transformation. How handsome Antoine was, and how distinguished looking! He did not understand the art of love-making as poor dear Cassner did, but he deserved to be well taken care of by some capable woman who could keep him away from musty, dusty books.

"Do you feel well, Antoine?"

Again the widow's light touch was on his forehead, and this time she puckered her smooth brow and looked at him with some concern.

"Your temperature's not right, Antoine; you're very feverish to-night," she said with a touch of anxiety.

## III.

ANTOINE'S books had gone. Only the rows of vacant shelves remained to trouble their owner with painful reminiscences. But Antoine refused to reminisce. One chapter in his life had closed, and he was done with it forever; he had determined to go straight on; he would not turn back to scan a single page that was behind.

He busied himself with various outside interests and strove to carry out the manifold suggestions made by his lady-love for his personal betterment. He thought about his clothes, brushed his hair properly, ate his meals at regular intervals, and took a normal amount of exercise. Withal, he tried to fancy he was supremely happy and had achieved the summit of earthly bliss.

One bright and sparkling April morning Antoine awoke with a realization that this day was a vital one for him, fraught with far-reaching consequences.

Before its sun should set his books would have been sold at auction. This day his many treasured volumes were to be scattered far and wide. Each book that he had loved and won would be ere night borne off by some chance purchaser or greedy dealer. This thought tormented him, although he strove to banish it by dwelling on the fact that the books had already gone from his possession, and his remaining interest in them must needs expire shortly and pass entirely from his consciousness.

He vowed it should be so, and it was for this reason he had chosen this especial day for a trip out of town with the fair widow: they had planned one more journey of inspection to a trim, cosey dwelling which had charmed the fancies of both and which they had at last decided to rent.

Antoine felt that he wished to be as far away as possible from the sacrifice of his past idols, and eagerly arranged for a day in the country.

They were to start at eleven, and Antoine, in his haste to get away, found himself ready to depart long before ten o'clock. How slowly the moments crept by! He looked repeatedly at his watch, and finally determined to take a stroll to while away the time.

He would walk up town towards the Park in order to put more distance between him and the book-sale. Ah, but there was a florist's shop in just the opposite direction, where he had planned to buy some violets for his lady-love. He purchased these, and then, having begun to walk that way, kept on until—yes, he had reached the very corner where the sale of his books was to be held. Once there, he glanced in through the window, determined that he would not cross the threshold.

As he stood there he spied several familiar faces grouped in the

auction-room. He could see Lamson looking at something with a keen air of relish; he was undoubtedly waiting to gobble up his first edition of Milton's early poems, printed in 1645; and there was that fox Billings, who had for years coveted his Shakespeare Quarto. Ah, he must drop in for just half an hour to see what prices the things would bring. He still had plenty of time to spare.

## IV.

THE Widow Cassner, arrayed in her best walking-suit and new spring bonnet, waited in vain for the arrival of Antoine; she peered out of the window and watched the timepiece on the mantel impatiently. No Antoine came. At last she laid aside her outside things, thinking that he had been detained and would come later in the day, but as the hours crept by and he failed to appear, she became really anxious lest some mischance had overtaken him.

She little dreamed that Antoine was quite oblivious of everything save what the auctioneer was saying. He had forgotten all except that here his treasures were. This was his last opportunity to see them once again, to handle them, to—ah, perchance to secure them!

And when the day was spent, nothing remained of that large, comfortable check which Whitely had bestowed upon him, and which he and the widow had planned to invest so wisely; but in its place Antoine had nearly all of the dearest of his treasures back again. He could not secure all, yet he was satisfied. He gathered together in two heavy bundles his choicest volumes, in order that even one night should not elapse before they were again under his roof, and leaving the others to be packed and sent to him as soon as possible, he hurried homewards, weary and worn, but filled with exultation.

## V.

ANTOINE sat in his library, and on the table before him were spread his dearest volumes. He held them in his hands and stroked their covers; he turned their pages gently and reverently. The joy and happiness of life had once more fluttered back to him. He laid his hand upon his Shakespeare Quarto and scrutinized it lovingly; he turned it over carefully to see if it had sustained any injury; he raised it to his lips and kissed it with adoration.

Suddenly his attention was arrested by the sound of someone entering the room without, and the door of his library opened quietly. There stood the Widow Cassner, beautiful in her new spring bonnet, but pale and anxious after her day's suspense.

With woman's intuition she grasped the situation at a glance.

"Antoine," she said reproachfully.

And then Antoine remembered. He jumped up hurriedly and in



dismay, realizing for the first time the enormity of his offence. How could he have forgotten her completely!

"You have been buying back your books, Antoine?" she questioned. "You could not bear to have them go. You were unhappy without them."

"Yes, yes," he said remorsefully. "I couldn't let them go. Old Billings was determined to have my Shakespeare Quarto, and 'twas a struggle to keep my Milton and my Chaucer out of that Lamson's clutches. My Johnson's gone, but I have saved my early dramatists." He ran his fingers over them caressingly, and then he looked up guiltily.

"You never can forgive me, and I can never forgive myself! These are not all. I've bought back everything that I could get. I've spent the money, all I had! There's nothing left! What must you think of me? Despise me all you can, it's not a thousandth part of what I deserve. I forgot everything except my books. I had no thought beyond getting them back. And now"—with a wild gesture of despair Antoine sank down and bowed his head upon the table.

The Widow Cassner stood in the doorway watching him. Tears filled her eyes and rolled down her plump cheeks. She saw Antoine fading away from her. She had deceived herself into believing that he could learn to be content in her practical world; she had deceived herself into believing that he could love her better than his books. After so long a friendship she should have known him better.

She crossed the room and laid her hand upon his shoulder.

"Never mind, Antoine," she said compassionately. "It is all right. I'm glad you've got your books. You would have missed them sadly. I never could have made up for them. It's better for us to be good friends—just that, and nothing more. When you feel lonely, you can drop in just the same and have a cup of tea. Good-night, Antoine. If you don't mind, I'd rather go alone."

When she had gone Antoine remained for a long time with his head bowed upon the table. Then he sat up and looked about him like one completely dazed, trying to realize all that this day's experience meant to him.

Never had the little widow seemed lovelier in his eyes than when she took her leave of him with quiet dignity. His dream of a bright, cosey fireside ornamented by her presence was ended forever.

It was long past midnight when Antoine rose at last and began mechanically to put his books back on the shelves. As he picked them up one by one and tenderly replaced them, a quiet, soothing sense of their companionship stole over him, and when he had restored them to their old places his knitted brow had cleared.

The Shakespeare Quarto was still upon the centre of the table in solemn state, and by its side he found a crushed and crumpled paper

containing the bunch of violets he had bought for the widow. They were still fragrant, and he placed them in a glass of water close by his beloved volume, and the crushed violets slowly revived and raised their drooping heads and shed their fragrance over the Shakespeare Quarto.



# IN ROSE TIME

BY WILLA SIBERT CATHER

O *H this is the joy of the rose;  
That it blows,  
And goes.*

Winter lasts a five months,  
Spring-time stays but one,  
Yellow blow the rye-fields  
When the rose is done.  
Pines are clad at Yuletide  
When the birch is bare,  
And the holly's greenest  
In the frosty air.

Sorrow keeps a stone house  
Builted grim and gray,  
Pleasure hath a straw thatch  
Hung with lanterns gay.  
On her petty savings  
Niggard Prudence thrives,  
Passion ere the moonset  
Bleeds a thousand lives.

Virtue hath a warm heart—  
Folly's dead and drowned,  
Friendship hath her own when  
Love is underground.  
Ah! for me the madness  
Of the spendthrift flower,  
Burning myriad sunsets  
In a single hour.

*For this is the joy of the rose;  
That it blows,  
And goes.*

# A LADY, A MORTAL, AND THE FOUR HUNDRED

*By Annulet Andrews*



YES, I was with Mrs. John Stanton after I left Lady Mary Mandeville, or, rather, after Lady Mary left me, for she brought me over as her companion and personal attendant, and left me here because she had not the money to take me back with her.

Odd! do you say? Oh, not at all; not having enough money is quite a way with the aristocracy. Lady Mary is one of its greatest spendthrifts.

Her Ladyship gave me an excellent recommendation, and Mr. Stanton at once secured me as companion to his wife.

There, Madam, turn your head on the other side, and I can brush your hair better.

You have heard of Mrs. John Stanton? I suppose everybody has, for she was a personage in New York three years ago. Mr. Stanton seemed rather a pompous gentleman, if I may presume to criticise him, and when he fetched me home with him from the agency he entered his front door—well, something in the manner a Lord Mayor would enter his carriage of state for the first time. I was sure from his style that Mrs. Stanton would be a lady who would wear diamonds in the morning.

Mr. Stanton fetched me into the library, and said with a note of pride in his voice as he entered: "I say, Nell, here is a girl I think you might like. She has been with Lady Mandeville as her companion." The person he addressed was a slender little lady in a green gown with a quantity of red-gold hair, and altogether she reminded me of a golden narcissus by an English brook, she was so gracious and fresh and fragrant as she came forward and extended her little white hand to me warmly.

"I think," she said, turning to her husband with a queer, derisive little smile, "that I should like this young lady even if she had not been employed by Lady Mandeville, for she is so very nice."

Mr. Stanton left us, and then Madam asked me to sit down, and in a few moments I felt as if I were in my own home, and the tears welled

up a bit in my eyes and my voice trembled, for I had met no one quite like her in all my life—no one who seemed to combine the dignity and grace of a great lady with the simplicity and honesty of a little child. She asked me about home, about my life and my tastes, not in an inquisitive way, nor yet as if she were doing it to entertain me, but just as if she really cared.

Of course, you can't live in an American family long without finding out all about its members, for while they do not speak out everything they know and feel to their equals, as our English gentry, they treat the members of their own household much as Christians are supposed to treat their Maker, from whom no secrets are hidden. I learned that Mr. Stanton was a Western gentleman—a self-made man, I believe they call them. Mrs. Stanton was from the South, wherever that may be, though from what she said to me now and then I fancy it is a country where the inhabitants are gentlemen and ladies or black people. She never talked before Mr. Stanton of her home or her people.

What is the Four Hundred, Madam? You can't say exactly? Well, nobody seems able to. When I first came to New York I thought it was something military, like the Royal Life Guards, but when Mr. Stanton talked of it so much, I found it was a term applied to the leading wealthy and fashionable people in New York society. Mr. Stanton was very ambitious to be one of the Four Hundred, and he used to go over the names of all the people in that body constantly. Madam was amiable and patient and kind, and she it was who, without the least effort on her part, made every forward step towards the goal of his ambition. The people Mrs. Stanton preferred were of the artistic world, and Mr. Stanton said it was all right to begin that way, as he heard the Four Hundred were gone on cranks. Gradually, though, as one after another of the Four Hundred began dropping in to Mrs. Stanton's evenings, the artistic people began to drop off, and then came a series of dinner parties. The first one was the prologue to the others.

Mr. Stanton met his guests at the door, standing right back of the flunkey and washing his hands, as it were, in the warm, scented atmosphere. As Mrs. —, I've forgotten her name, but she owns a crown of yellow diamonds and leads the Four Hundred—well, as he greeted her the poor gentleman looked as elated as our Universal Provider, Mr. Whitely, would appear upon leading a Duchess to the lace department.

On the other hand, Mrs. Stanton did not seem the least awed or disconcerted. But one could see that the great ladies of the Four Hundred felt condescending and superior.

Mr. Stanton introduced me as Morton, the former companion of

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Lady Mary Mandeville, and I saw Madam blush at it way down at the end of the table as we sat down to dinner.

During the *entrée* a pause came, and the whole company heard these words fall from the lips of the lady on Mr. Stanton's right—the yellow-diamond lady:

"Yes, we have a summer palace at Oyster Bay, but we are not going down this year, so if you and Mrs. Stanton want to economize in pew-rent, we will turn our servants' pew over to you for the summer."

The words came boldly and insolently from the lady's lips. They were meant to cut, and the poor host's face turned scarlet. A soft, clear laugh from Madam filled in the gap, and she said, just as if she had taken the lady's remark for a huge joke:

"Oh! that is kind of you, and we will accept it if you will occupy our servants' quarters in town."

If Madam had failed in one note of her voice, or had once let go her angelic and innocently good-humored expression of countenance, the whole thing would have been flat and vulgar, but she did it just beautifully, with the art and grace of a real, true lady.

That was why her shaft told so well. The great lady bit her lips, instead of biting Madam's head off, as she would have liked. Some of the gentlemen forgot themselves and laughed, as the nobles did once when one of them knocked the Prince of Wales's hat off in Parliament, then, in horror of their levity, straightened themselves up and began telling stupid jokes. All the ladies looked amused, as only ladies can when they see a grand personage of their own sex driven to cover. As for Madam, she was more brilliant and bewitching that evening than I had ever known her to be. Nothing could stop her gayety, though poor Mr. Stanton frowned at her all the time and looked as black as any fat, florid gentleman could look.

As soon as Madam's guests had departed she went upstairs.

When I was combing out her lovely hair in her living-room Mr. Stanton entered. She gave a quick glance at his angry face and said laconically,—

"I have made your social fortune, my dear."

"You have!—but don't you think you had better see me alone——" he checked himself, frowning.

"No," she said with a weary little sigh. "Phyllis would know what we are going to say any way. All women know what married people say in a quarrel,—but I must refuse to quarrel. I'm just too awfully tired."

"You have aggrieved and insulted the most important woman in the Four Hundred," said Mr. Stanton angrily, "a woman whose social frown or smile means the making or marring of anyone's career."

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"Tut, tut," said Madam; "I tell you I have made your social career; besides, I did not insult the person you refer to. I was just a dear, innocent little thing, who never dreamed of any guest of mine wishing to insult me, and I took the lady's rude speech as a nice, kindly bit of persiflage."

"But she knew you meant the insult."

"Yes, just as clearly as she knew that I knew she meant to be rude to you; but I did mine so well, dear."

"I tell you, none of these people will ever notice us again," Mr. Stanton declared hotly.

"And I insist," answered Madam intrepidly, "that we have arrived. We did not get there by running into Mrs. Van Raster's bicycle and sending her flowers and sugared notes after the accident, nor did we attain greatness by the open door of women's clubs and East End charities. My method was simple, direct, and harmonious. I treated a fool according to her folly; in other words, I answered an insolent woman with her own insolence."

"But you can't——"

"But I did, only I won my battle like a lady."

"But you aren't going on insulting all these people!" went on Mr. Stanton desperately.

"Why, if they were all cads like that woman, I wouldn't know them. I couldn't sacrifice myself for your ambition. It is only the men and women who never really belong in good society who are snobs, and, unfortunately, these people often push forward into prominence, like the militia in a military parade."

"Well, you may think, with your Southern blood, that you are always making me feel without saying a word—you may think you can afford to defy these people, even to sneer at them, but I tell you"—and he brought his fist down angrily upon the mantel—"you can't do it. The South's played out. Southern society in New York is sneered at. Southern people are just like other people these days, and they've got to hustle."

Madam smiled. "I think I've hustled a good bit to-night," she answered.

"They've got to stop insulting people."

"Then people have got to stop insulting them," answered Madam.

"They've got to stop talking about who and what they are, and——" Mr. Stanton was in a crimson rage by now, and his wife's face was white.

"It is here," she said, "that one is told so much about—well, not about what they are, but what they have. I tell you"—and her eyes blazed—"I'm sick of hearing that one woman is the richest in New York, that another owns the finest jewels, that still another has a pug

that cost a thousand dollars, and that some other is happy in the possession of two French maids and a manicure woman. I never thought of what people had at home. It was just what they were, nice and kind and hospitable and agreeable. That was all."

"Well," he said, "it's different here, and you can't take the same sort of stand."

"I know it," she answered, "and that is why I took the stand I did to-night, a far different one than my nature or my inheritance of good breeding likes or approves."

Mr. Stanton left her, and then I finished her hair and helped her to bed in silence, for she was not the kind of a lady to abuse her husband behind his back to anyone.

There now, Madam, I hope I'm not tiring you. Very well, if you are interested, I will go on while I rub your head.

Well, as Mrs. Stanton prophesied, her shaft that evening did get them right into the Four Hundred. Society was agog with the story. Of course, the lady with the yellow diamonds withdrew her favor from the Stantons, but every leader of society has a rival in another leader, and this latter leader became bosom friends with Mrs. Stanton at once, and as for the men—well, you know gentlemen do always applaud a plucky woman, although they have very little moral courage themselves.

And how did Mr. Stanton like this, you ask? Oh, he seemed to think it was entirely his own doing. He attributed the beginning of it all to the splendor of his dinner. He was immensely elated. He began to give Madam advice about manners and matters of social diplomacy. That seems to be the trouble with self-made gentlemen. They are so satisfied with making themselves that they want to make everybody else, and Mr. Stanton could not see that his wife was born, not made.

But the fact that she was a lady of quality did burst upon him suddenly in the midst of the season, when Lady Caroline Couper came to visit the lady of the yellow diamond crown. She had no sooner arrived than she informed her hostess that she was going to hunt up a little cousin of hers who had married a New York gentleman named Stanton. The little cousin proved no other than Mrs. John Stanton, and when Lady Couper called and embraced Madam before the eyes of Mr. Stanton and told her how Madam's father and herself had been sweethearts when the former was at Harrow—well, then even Mr. Stanton had to see that he had married one whom he must admit to be a real lady without any worrying over it, and the lady with the yellow diamond crown had to chew the cud of her humiliation and invite the Stantons to dinner.

By this time in the season poor Mrs. Stanton was pale and nervous

to a degree. It is bad enough to be married to one of those big, coarse, energetic, red-faced gentlemen, even when he is not mad about going into society, but when he is, oh, dear me! why it's like spending one's life riding around in full dress in a puffing automobile to the music of a calliope. Mr. Stanton was what one might call a loud gentleman, and one could see that he got on Madam's nerves. Madam grew seedier and seedier.

I suggested to Mr. Stanton that Madam was growing ill, and that perhaps there was too much company.

"Nonsense!" he said. "Why, it's her very life. She'd die without it. It is the one thing she enjoys."

And so I would bite my lips in silence, seeing it was no use protesting, since Mr. Stanton was one of the kind of husbands who had a way of calling his pleasures and ambitions those of his wife. We have many husbands like that in the old country.

When I combed out her long, lovely hair in the evening, often the tears would start in her eyes and she would give a little, nervous sob under her breath.

"Oh Phyllis!" she said one night in a weary, heart-sick way, "I'm so tired of cultivating people."

"But you do not have to," I answered; "they cultivate you."

"Well, it's just the same thing—I do not want to cultivate or be cultivated. In the land where I came from love does not need to be cultivated any more than flowers. They both spring up naturally in warm, soft places."

"I do not want to complain," she added apologetically, "of the people or the life here. The nice people are charming and kind, like the best-bred people the world over. It is just the attitude and atmosphere that I don't like. I don't like making a duty and an ambition of one's social life—scheming, calculating, putting a valuation on friendship and love. I can't get used to the idea that making a social success is like any other business arrangement, or that it is anything to strive for at all."

In May something happened that seemed to undermine Madam's health completely. Mr. Stanton had cut her off from any intercourse with her Southern relatives, and so one day, when I chanced to open the door, I was quite put to it with confusion when a young gentleman stepped inside and announced that he was Madam's cousin Dick and wanted to see Mrs. Stanton at once.

He was a beautiful young gentleman, tall and dark and graceful, like an old portrait. Madam was coming down the stairs as he entered the library, and I heard her give a little, soft cry under her breath, and then she was down before I could catch my thoughts together, and she had her arms around the tall young fellow and



was hugging him and kissing him as though she had been the mother of him.

"Oh Phyllis!" she said, "this is my cousin Dick. This is the way the men look down home," and she stood off from him and eyed him proudly as he bowed and shook my hand.

He had a long paper box under his arm, and he handed it to Madam.

"I'm on my way to the Philippines, Nell," he said, "and I just came by to bring you these. They are some flowers from home."

The room was full of orchids at that moment, but Madam seized the box as if it contained the only real flowers in the world. She sat down on the floor and lifted the lid. It seemed so very silly, perhaps, her crying, you know, but the tears came in a perfect stream down her cheeks as she buried her face in the blossoms and sobbed, "Oh Dick! they didn't cost anything! they didn't cost anything!"

I started to leave, but she called me back. Lifting the blossoms out one by one to show me, "This is a magnolia bud," she said, "from the great trees in the old garden. See, isn't it beautiful? and do you know, Phyllis, dear, it holds the song of the mocking-bird in its heart."

My eyes were wet too. I knew that these flowers were to Madam what a bunch of English buttercups would be to me, and how they would bring back the song of the cuckoo and the glory of an English field.

There were yellow jessamines and white Cape jessamines, and tea-roses and tea-olive. A wild, sweet fragrance filled the room, and Madam said over and over again, laying the treasures against her trembling lips:

"They didn't cost anything! they didn't cost anything!"

"Nothing but love," said the young master; and then I thought it time to leave, since the very mention of the word suggests the departure of one person when three are present; not that I mean to imply that there was then or ever anything serious between Madam and her cousin, at least that I know of.

Madam grew paler and more listless after the young gentleman's visit, but the house was kept going just the same. Mr. Stanton was infatuated with what he called his social success, although he was really playing Bottom to Madam's Titania all the time. Vanity Fair laughed at him, seeing that it was his wife's fairy-like spells that encircled and cast a halo about his own stupid and blatant personality.

He joined the Sons of the Revolution and began to hunt up pedigrees. Like so many people over here whose recent ancestors are unmentionable, he raked up his history many hundred years back, and

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found that he was related to somebody who was related to somebody with a title. Then he set some people who are paid to hunt up such things on the track of his progenitors.

One evening, when Madam was feeling particularly seedy and I was preparing her for bed, he burst into the room with a large package, looking like the cook in *Cyrano de Bergerac* with a big pie. It was one of those chilly evenings in early June, and his face was very red from the cold.

"Ah, you are too tired," he said breezily.

"No," answered Madam wearily.

"I just wanted to show you these." He laid his parcel on the dressing-table, opened it, and lifted up some large objects brightly painted and looking a little fresh and sticky.

"What are they?" asked Madam.

"They are my various shields and crests and coats of arms," said Mr. Stanton.

Madam gasped, and really, you must excuse me for smiling, but the poor, vain gentleman had a lot of gaudy mottoes and all the birds and beasts that were in Noah's ark and all the flowers from the woods and fields richly emblazoned upon these pieces of wood, carved in various appropriate shapes, and now, would you think it? I noticed supporters on one of his crests, and these may be used, as you know, only by Knights of the Bath in England.

Madam scrutinized each one of these marvellous conceptions with an irritating smile as Mr. Stanton held them for her inspection.

"What are you going to do with them?" she asked as he laid the last one aside.

"Why, you know, they are the coats of arms of the various branches of my family," said Mr. Stanton, swelling visibly, "and I thought I'd hang them along the hall, like some I saw in an English home."

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Madam.

Mr. Stanton looked quite vexed. "It doesn't follow," he said crossly, "that because a fellow's father worked at a trade or because his grandfather didn't—er—come over in the first cabin that one has not had aristocratic ancestors way back in the past."

Madam's face flushed with anger and mortification. "Ah, my dear fellow," she said, "why can't you be simple and unpretentious,—just what you are,—and let all this stuff and nonsense alone."

"It isn't stuff and nonsense. I've got as good a right to be proud of my ancestors as you have—perhaps better, for though you are always letting hints drop about your fine blood, I've never seen anything in the way of data to show for it."

Madam was at a white heat by now. "The reason, perhaps, why you have heard so little is because I was loyal enough and modest

enough not to flaunt any superiority I might have in that direction in your face," she said as she went to a little *escritoire* in the corner of the room and opened it. She pulled open its little drawers. "The portraits of some of my people are upstairs in the attic," she said, "but here are some miniatures. Here," she said, drawing forth a locket on a blue ribbon, "is one of my first American ancestresses on my mother's side, Lady Mary Houston. She and her young son came over to America with Lord Baltimore's colony. The miniature is one of Malbone's."

Mr. Stanton took it angrily, but his face softened a moment as he saw how very like to his wife's face was this one limned on ivory. She drew out picture after picture, each one of some distinguished person—gentlemen and ladies of title, Revolutionary heroes, fine old Huguenots with stately shoulders and powdered hair. They lay in a heap on the desk, Mr. Stanton examining them one by one surlily. As he laid the last one down, he swaggered towards his pile of painted boards and said to her in an angry, insolent tone:

"Well, my lady, your ancestry wouldn't have counted a damned bit if I hadn't taken you out of your poverty and set you up and made a lady of you."

Madam's face was white and her lips were drawn. Her tiny little nostrils quivered. She walked straight over to her husband, and before he knew what she was about she had gathered that pile of painted boards in her arms and thrown them into the fire.

Mr. Stanton caught her arm. "You common creature," she said, her whole soul in rebellion, "I married you because I was proud of your being just what you were, and I thought you were proud of it too, and now that you are not—why, you have nothing to be proud of at all."

He made her no answer. No man answers a woman when she is as angry as Madam was at that moment. In our country they strike their wives when they are brutes like Mr. Stanton, but you see he was an American, if he was not a real gentleman. He stood there a moment looking sullenly in the fire at his tawdry, painted boards, then turned and left the room.

Soon after this Mrs. Stanton was taken ill. The doctors called it pneumonia, but so many ladies die from the heart, and I know Mrs. Stanton did. People were most kind and loving to her, and she felt it deeply and told me that everything seemed clear and easy, now that she knew that she would not have to bother any more.

But when she lay dying, with a bit of her cousin's jessamine clutched in her tiny white hand, a satirical, satisfied little smile passed across her lips, and she whispered,—

"Phyllis, dear, I'm going where there is no Four Hundred."

# THE REV. PILGREEN'S WOOING

*By Matt Crim*



## I.

THE first time Mr. Silas Pilgreen went over into Deer Creek Valley it was to preach the funeral sermon of Alpheus Jephson. He died early in the winter, when the roads were almost impassable from heavy rains and the days were dark and cold. The preacher who came once a month to minister to the spiritual needs of the Deer Creek Valley people also languished upon a bed of illness miles away over the mountains, so Alpheus was buried with a very short shrift indeed, Mr. Mobley reading and praying by the open grave, and then lending a hand to help the other neighbors shovel in the sodden red clay upon the pine coffin. It was a lowering day, with the wind sweeping down the mountain sides and through the valley, driving sheets of icy mist before it, while others gathered and hung heavy folded in the wake of each gust.

The Widow Jephson shivered and wept as they led her away from the graveyard, and cast yearning glances back at that red mound, marked by unhewn gray stones picked hastily from a pile on the roadside.

"It does 'pear so hard an' lonesome to leave him here by hisself in the cold, wet ground, an' night comin' on too," she sobbed. "He never did wanter die in winter time no how, an' I do think the Almighty could 'a' took him in summer, when it 'ud 'a' been possible to 'a' had a funeral. He deserves the best sermon any preacher can make."

But winter storms raged high and spring came late that year, and first one thing and then another interfered until summer lay hot upon the land. Then news of Mr. Silas Pilgreen's eloquence penetrated to Deer Creek Valley. He belonged to another settlement entirely, but it was arranged that he should come over in the place of the minister in charge and preach the funeral sermon.

Mr. Silas Pilgreen possessed an exalted sense of his duty towards man, as well as the gift of ready speech. His heart yearned over the sinner, and his youthful enthusiasm, tempered by a certain dignified gravity, rarely flagged. Fierce as a roaring lion in his denunciations of evil, he could be tender as the voice of a dove when leading the wrong-

doer from his crooked ways. People trembled with fear or melted to tears under the power of his eloquence, and the vibrations of spiritual awakening were felt in communities remote from his own.

But with it all he had very little more book-learning than the people to whom he preached. He was simply an unlettered genius fired by the example of Biblical characters, and especially the career of Christ. Educated and placed in the world, he would still have been a leader to his fellows. Imagination, personal magnetism, and, above all, that exalted idea of love in its impersonal quality, would have given him force anywhere.

The external man harmonized very well with his calling. He was tall and smooth-faced, with long, black hair and beaming, kindly eyes. There had been some attempt at clerical fashion in his homely country attire and in the way he brushed his hair, but his brown hands showed honest contact with the plough-handles and other implements of the farm, for his parishioners couldn't do more than contribute slightly to his income. However, in the field, in the blacksmith shop, or wherever he might happen to find a listener, Mr. Silas Pilgreen lost no opportunity of voicing what he firmly believed to be the truth, and his sermons were first preached to himself while he split rails, or chopped wood, or went about other daily toil equally heavy.

"I'm glad I ain't got to work with my head to get a livin'. You can plough an' you can hoe or you can do purty much anything else in the field without havin' to think about it. Yes, I'm glad the Almighty give me a little piece o' land an' the strength to work it."

He was feeling particularly cheerful and thankful that Saturday afternoon when he rode over into Deer Creek Valley. His crops promised a good harvest, and there were indications of a wide-spread religious revival in his part of the country. He divided his time between singing hymns in a low-pitched voice and refreshing his memory on certain passages of Scripture.

It was natural and proper that he should "put up" at the Jephsons'. They were expecting him, and old Mr. Jephson and his wife sat on the piazza when he rode up. They made him welcome in hearty fashion, Mr. Jephson leading the horse away to the stable, and Mrs. Jephson bustling about to get him a chair.

"A master hot summer," she remarked to make conversation.

"Yes, it's been purty warm, but we ain't no call to grumble."

"No, I s'pose not. Wouldn't you like a drink o' water?"

"I don't know but I would, if it ain't too much trouble."

"Tennessee!"

"Yes'm."

"Fetch Mr. Pilgreen a fresh gourd o' water."

A shy, awkward-looking young woman came through the entry in

a few minutes with the desired refreshment. Bands of dun-colored hair framed a meek, freckled face, and she kept one hand twisted in the folds of her dress while she stood before the preacher.

"This is our Tennessee, Mr. Pilgreen, but Georgy ain't at home. We never had but two daughters, an' their pa 'lowed they oughter be named for our States. I'm from Tennessee—an' she's the youngest, for I let Mr. Jephson have first choice."

"I mistrust you're a mighty good wife, Mis' Jephson."

"Well, I try to be, Mr. Pilgreen, holdin' it a part o' my Christian duty."

"So it is, Mis' Jephson."

"You ain't never been married?"

"No'm," he said, blushing slightly, a change of color reflected in the countenance of Tennessee, who still lingered with the empty gourd in her hand, listening to the conversation.

"That 'pears a little strange, seein' that preachers do get married about the first thing."

"Maybe Mr. Pilgreen ain't found nobody he likes, ma," said Tennessee in an agony of embarrassment.

"La! I see plenty," he declared.

"Then you're too bashful to court 'em," Mrs. Jephson put in with a laugh. "Now, I wouldn't be. You'd find 'em willin' enough."

"Why, ma!" protested Tennessee.

"It's so. Girls put on airs an' make out like they think themselves too good for anybody, but they're to be had for the askin' easy enough, an' a likely young preacher might take his choice."

Tennessee retired in modest confusion, but as she went out she heard her mother ask the preacher his age and heard him say that he was thirty.

During the afternoon Mr. Pilgreen heard all about Alpheus, and made notes in memory for his discourse. The old people dwelt tenderly on the memory of their son, recalling all his childish exploits as well as the acts of his later life. He had been a good citizen and a consistent church member, as they declared that all the neighbors could testify.

"Nobody could speak more truly 'bout that than Meely, but she had to go to market to-day, an' she 'lowed we could tell you all better'n she could."

"Is she the widow?"

"Yes, an' a smart woman," said the old man warmly. "We 'lowed she'd better bring the children an' come here to live after Alph. died, but she wouldn't. She 'lowed she'd get along, an' it 'ud be better for the boys to know they'd got to work for her when they grow up. She was turrible heart-broke when Alpheus died. It didn't pear like nothn' 'ud do her any good. She lives over there on the hill."

## The Rev. Pilgreen's Wooing

Mr. Pilgreen had passed the little cabin and had observed its clean-swept yard and embowering fruit-trees. The old woman bent to her knitting with tightening lips while the two men talked. The daughter-in-law had never been an enthusiasm with her.

"Meely does keep a nice house," she admitted when her husband appealed to her, but that was all she said.

That night after Mr. Pilgreen retired he heard the bustle of a new arrival. The boards between his room and the one next to it were very thin, and presently he heard Georgia and Tennessee talking.

"What made you so late, anyhow?"

"It was all Meely's fault. She was bent on seein' ever'thing in town, an' then she bought herself a new spotted muslin, an'——"

"A'ready?"

"Well, it was a black ground with white polka dots, an' then she 'lowed she needed a new bonnet, an' got one with one o' them short flarin' tails ruffled all around."

"She is makin' a spread."

"She's thinkin' about marryin' again, Tennessee Jephson,—that's what."

"Well, don't tell ma, for she's set against Meely anyway."

"I don't care. I think she'd better wait till Alph's funeral's been preached 'fore settin' her cap for another man. Women that's had one husband oughter be satisfied."

A tremulous sigh was wafted through the frail partition, and the preacher was conscious of a feeling of pity for the meek, homely Tennessee. He heard his own name mentioned, and turned over in order not to be tempted to listen any more.

He preceded his entertainers to church next morning, desiring a quiet season of meditation before the beginning of the services. The high unpainted pulpit concealed him from the curious gaze of early worshippers straying in. He heard the rustling and whispering of gathering crowds. When he rose to give out the first hymn the house was crowded, and even the doors and windows were darkened by intruding heads. He was used to the battery of stranger eyes, and his gaze wandered calmly over the sea of faces until it was arrested by the blue eyes of the Widow Jephson. The mourning family all occupied the front bench, and she sat directly before him with her children, two small boys. Her whole personality impressed him as wonderfully distinct and individual. Her black calico gown settled about her with a fluffy airiness unlike the other women's, and her round, pensive face shone out of the ruffled sunbonnet with bewitching charm. How Mr. Pilgreen knew that her eyes were so blue and her hair the color of corn-silk he could not have explained. He felt a momentary confusion, and also a pity for the departed Alpheus he had not before experienced.

Think of having to leave a woman like that to embrace the cold shadow of death!

The next instant his conscience had overtaken him, and he was appalled by the wickedness of such thoughts. Was he not there to preach a funeral discourse, to comfort the hearts of those sorrowing people, and to give the sinner a warning? He lined out the hymn in a stern, loud voice.

But it was no use; the mischief had been done. He preached with fervid earnestness, and not only the Jephsons but half the congregation had melted to tears before he finished; but he was conscious only of one woman's tears, he heard only her sobs. When her face was hidden in the folds of a black-bordered cotton handkerchief, his voice softened and grew husky; when her wet eyes were lifted to his, a sense of power streamed down to his very finger-tips. He was preaching to and for her, and almost lost sight of Alpheus as an individual soul. He had simply been her husband; his taking away had left her heart widowed if not broken.

"I must say it was the powerfulest funeral sermon I ever heard," Mr. Mobley frankly declared when the service was over; "an' I don't except Uncle Jesse Davis either, an' I useter think he could beat the world on them kind o' sermons."

"I didn't know Alph. Jephson was such a good man," mused a simple, conscience-stricken woman.

"Well, you see, it took the preacher to bring out his good p'int's," said a neighbor, overhearing her. "A body has to be dead an' gone, it 'pears to me, 'fore they're known. We 'lowed Alph. was no better'n other men, an' now we find out he was mighty nigh a saint. It does beat all, the way fo'ks are misunderstood in this world. I'm right glad the Almighty ain't as blind as we are. An' what do you think o' Meely?" her voice suddenly dropped to a whisper.

"That she's bearin' up mighty well."

"Bearin' up! Well, I'd say so. Look at that bonnet now."

"It's all black, ain't it?"

"Yes, but there ain't a mite o' *mournin'* about it. You can't mourn in ruffles an' silk ribbin, if they are black. It ain't every woman that can have such a good husband, an' you'd think she'd still be a-weepin' her eyes out."

"But Meely's right young, an' it ain't natural for young fo'ks to go a-grievin' all their days."

"Well, she needn't to 'a' wore such a bonnet as that, anyhow. Look at them Jephson girls; they ain't nothin' beside her."

That was what Mr. Silas Pilgreen thought too as he walked home with the family. Meely had spoken to him before leaving the church, slipping softly to his side, her eyes still wet with tears.



"I'm so much obliged to you," she said quiveringly. "Nothin' more feelin' could 'a' been said, an' it just suited what I always thought o' Alph."

The preacher blushed and stammered, suffocated by an emotion to which he had been an utter stranger heretofore. The little boys were clinging shyly to her skirts, and he patted the one nearest to him on the head.

Meely and her children dined at her father-in-law's that day, and Mr. Pilgreen might have been consuming dust and ashes for all thought he took of the meal. It was his mission to cheer and console the family, and he talked gravely of the life to come, and the world where all would some day meet with the surety of remaining together. He talked to all the family, and yet his eyes sought Meely's again and again. Now and then he was conscious that Tennessee watched him furtively and listened so absorbingly that she forgot her dinner. But it was only a vague consciousness, and passed unheeded.

The hours of the afternoon passed in a sort of dream to him, and he was tempted to accept the warm invitation of the old people to spend another night with them. In his secret soul he reflected that if he did he might have opportunity to speak more with the widow. But he had walked too long in a straight path of duty to swerve so easily. He knew that the old aunt who kept house for him would be alarmed if he failed to return that evening. He had been so strict in keeping his word with her, even in such small matters, that she would think only a serious mishap could make him break it. He went out to the lot with old Mr. Jephson to saddle the horse. When he came back to make his adieus, Meely stood at the gate with her bonnet on.

"You ain't goin'?" exclaimed her father-in-law.

"Yes, I must see to things. The calf ain't been watered to-day, an' the chickens must be fed."

"Come back an' stay all night."

"No, it won't do no good, pa."

"But I 'lowed it 'ud be such a lonesome day for you, Meely, seein' as it's all been fetched back to you so plain."

"Every day is lonesome," she said with a sigh that went straight to the heart of Mr. Pilgreen. Her blue eyes were looking mournfully into his, but for the life of him he could not utter a word. He hurried in to say good-by to the women.

"I hope this ain't goin' to be the last time you come to see us, Mr. Pilgreen."

"I hope not, Mis' Jephson."

"An' maybe you'll find a wife over here in our valley."

"La, ma!" exclaimed Georgia.

"Well, preachers oughter be married."

"An' I think so too," he said, and beat a flurried retreat. Meely still lingered at the gate, talking to the old man.

"She's doin' it a-purpose to get him to walk home with her," Georgia whispered to her sister. "There, he's hangin' the bridle on his arm. I told you so."

Tennessee stared wistfully.

"Maybe he can't help likin' her."

"She oughter be ashamed o' herself,—but I knowed what that bonnet meant when I saw her a-gettin' it."

Meanwhile Mr. Pilgreen walked along with Meely, dumb with blissful confusion. He tried to think of something to say to draw her mind away from the past, but nothing more original than the weather suggested itself to his thoughts.

"It's been a fine summer for raisin' young ducks an' things," he stammered as they met a procession of those short-legged creatures waddling and gabbling up the lane.

"More'n common?" she questioned in a tone of surprise.

"Well, I don't know; maybe not. My Aunt Melindy, she keeps house for me,—an' a mighty peaceable, good woman she is too,—she 'lowed t'other day she had never seen fowls turn out better."

"I've been so busy helpin' in the fields an' goin' to market, I ain't had much time to notice how things was goin' 'bout the house. I leave the boys to tend to them things. They take after their pa, an' he always liked to have plenty o' chickens for eatin' an' ducks an' geese for feathers."

Her plump bosom heaved in a gentle sigh.

"It must be a sight o' help when a man takes interest in them things."

"It is."

"I always like to tend about the house myself, an' help Aunt Melindy."

He trembled and blushed over the significance of the speech, especially as Meely gave him a soft glance around the sombre brim of her bonnet.

"Ain't this a purty sight down the valley?" she remarked, pausing to lean against the fence, where she could overlook the top rail.

"It's one o' the Almighty's pictures, made for His creatures. We can see 'em every day an' all day. I 'low sometimes there ain't nothin' to beat the mornin' when it's just comin' in streaks o' red, an' the mornin' star trembles like it was afraid o' bein' put out by the bigger light, or when the sun's a-risin' an' all the world is a-glitterin' an' shinin' with dew."

"I useter like the nights better, when the moon was a-shinin' an' the crickets an' July flies a-singin' in the grass, but that was when me

an' Alph. sat out under the trees a-courtin', an' I hadn't a thought o' trouble."

Her sighs and soft, trembling tones wrung Mr. Pilgreen's heart. He edged a little closer to her.

"It must be powerful lonesome for you now."

"It is; so lonesome!" and now her eyes looked straight into his, shining, limpid as a child's, through tears.

Mr. Pilgreen was lifted almost out of his shoes.

"There ain't nothin' to do but to trust in the Almighty," he gasped, then felt somehow that he had not, after all, said the right thing.

"Little more an' I'd 'a' took right holt o' her then an' there," he mused excitedly to himself as he rode homeward. When his thoughts gave him time to observe once more external things, he was surprised to find that the face of nature itself had changed to him, had taken on a newer, subtler beauty. His conscience smote him that it should be so; it seemed a disloyalty to his love of the spiritual that an earthly love could fasten upon him with such power. Life thrilled to all its infinite depths, and where he had once been stirred only by religious zeal he was now possessed by the love of a woman. Really the two so intermingled—the human and the divine—he could not distinguish between them.

Mrs. Melinda Pilgreen sat in the door-way, smoking her pipe, that evening when he reached home.

"You're a little late, ain't you, Silas?" she called eagerly when he dismounted from his horse at the gate.

"You didn't give me up, Aunt Melindy, did you?"

"Oh, no; I knowed you'd come if you said so."

She had his supper on the table when he came in, and sat down on the opposite side to hear all the news. She was a fat, homely old woman, with not a tooth left in her mouth, and only a scanty remnant of hair on her head. He thought of another form and face in that seat opposite him, and then started guiltily as his aunt spoke to him.

"You don't 'pear to be eatin' much, Silas. Are you sick?"

"No'm."

"Them cold greens are good. I b'iled 'em a-purpose for you."

"I ain't somehow hungry," he replied, pushing back his plate.

"So you like the fo'ks over in Deer Creek Valley? Did many come out to hear you?"

"The house was packed," he replied with modest pride. But even then, and nearly all the time he talked to her, he blinked at the flame of the candle and seemed abstracted.

"Aunt Melindy, how long ought a widder to wait 'fore she marries again?" he asked after a moment's deep thought.

"Good gracious, Silas, what are you talkin' about? I don't see as they oughter ever marry again."

"But many times they do."

"I know it, an' 'fore their first husbands is cold in their graves; but it ain't right, no it ain't."

"We ain't got no Scripture authority for thinkin' it's sinful for 'em to marry again, Aunt Melindy."

"I don't say as we have, Silas, but let 'em wait an' mourn for the loss o' one husband 'fore they're castin' sheep's-eyes about for another. A year is little enough time. That widder over in Deer Creek Valley ain't a-thinkin' o' marryin' again a'ready, is she?"

"Not that I know, Aunt Melindy," he replied quite steadily, but turning guiltily away from her eyes. He rose from the table, went out into the yard, and leaned upon the gate. His pulses throbbed; through all his troubled soul he felt the splendid beauty of the night. The bewitchment enthralling him still cast its influence upon everything else. He longed to have Meely's warm hand in his, to feel her breathing presence at his side.

"That's what she meant when she 'lowed she liked moonlight and night the best. It's made for such thoughts and feelin's," he mused, watching the silvered radiance of the yet unseen moon, as it spread upward over the eastern sky. The fragrance of dew-wet flowers penetrating the soundless dusk entranced his senses, folding him in a dream. But the moon was following the wake of her heralding lights, and presently a clear level beam shone straight into his eyes. He woke with a start and a sigh, the restless doubt underlying and embittering his new joy rising to the surface again.

Had he only yielded to a subtle temptation of the devil in loving this woman?

"If I'd seen her first anywhere else 'ceptin' while I was standin' in the pulpit, an' there to preach her husband's funeral too," he groaned in spirit. "But the Lord knows I couldn't help it," he continued self-excusingly. "I hadn't a thought o' fallin' into a trap; I hadn't a thought o' anything but doin' my duty when I got up there an' saw her. Well, I'll not say a word; I'll not let on what my feelin's are till the year o' her mournin' is over. Then, the Lord willin', I'll ask her to be my wife."

Mr. Pilgreen adhered firmly to that resolution, although he could not resist the temptation of occasionally riding over into Deer Creek Valley to see the Jephsons, and he also assisted at the "big meetin'." But never a word did he speak to Meely that he might not have addressed to any other woman. It finally went abroad in the valley that he was courting Tennessee Jephson.

"It does beat all, the taste some men fo'ks has," said Mrs. Mobley in a tone of disgust. "Our Ca'line is a sight smarter an' better-lookin' than Tennessee Jephson, an'——"

"But we're to have one Silas in the family, Susan, an' I don't know as we'll want another if he is a preacher," Mr. Mobley replied; then he lowered his tone and wagged his head wisely as he continued,—

"It's my belief it ain't Tennessee at all."

"Who is it, then?"

"The widder."

"*Meely?*"

"Yes."

"Why, he never looks at her. Mr. Mobley, you certainly are losin' your mind."

"No, I ain't, honey. He don't say nothin' to her, but I've seen looks—well, the sort o' looks I useter give you on the sly——"

"It's Tennessee, I tell you, sure as you live."

But the gossips waited in vain for further developments. The "big meetin'" closed, and Mr. Pilgreen returned home, still biding his time in patience. Only his aunt detected the change love had made in him.

"He ain't said nothin' to me about it, but sure as you live I know the thought o' some woman's got holt o' him," she said to Miss Emmeline Head, her neighbor and confidante.

"It ain't acted on his preachin'."

"But it does on his thinkin'. He's been the most single-hearted creetur in doin' the Lord's work I ever knowed in my life till now. He's had nothin' else on his mind but savin' sinners, readin' the Bible, an' prayin'."

"Gracious me! he ain't give up doin' them things, has he?"

"Oh, no; but he's took to sittin' with the Bible on his knee, while his thoughts are a-wanderin', an' when I speak to him onexpectedly he turns red an' looks bashful as a girl. Then he's always hangin' on the gate in the evenin', gazin' at the moon; an' t'other day I found some poetry he'd cut out of the newspaper in his hymn-book."

"An' they war'n't Scripture verses?"

"No, they war'n't Scripture verses; they was all about some woman with red hair an' blue eyes. I want Silas to marry, but I'd hate mighty bad for him to get a red-headed woman. She'd be sure to walk over him."

"Why don't you get him to tell you 'bout it?"

"I have tried to lead up to it in ways unbeknownst to him, but he always was close-mouthed about his feelin's."

It was corn-gathering time, and Mr. Silas Pilgreen was at work in an upland field joining the public highway, one morning, when Mr. Mobley rode up to the fence and hailed him.

"Fine weather for work, ain't it?" he said genially when the preacher came nearer. "I 'lowed to stay at home to-day an' help the children gether our crop, but Mis' Mobley wanted some things from the store; an' then I took a notion I'd ride over here to see my old friend Eli Carlyle, an' 'specially as I could do some o' my neighbors a good turn too."

"How are the fo'ks over your way?" the other inquired, thinking of only one of them.

"Doin' purty well. Why ain't you been over lately?"

"I've been that busy I couldn't. I 'low to come as soon as I get through with this."

"You're wanted to-morrow night."

"What for?"

"To marry Meely Jephson."

For an instant Mr. Pilgreen's face was flooded with color, driven there by the wild, too joyful, thought that she understood and intended to end his self-imposed probation. Widows could do that, couldn't they? But the next moment the crushing truth was borne in upon him.

"Marry—marry her?" he stammered.

"Yes, to Billy Sawyer."

"But it ain't been a year since her husband died."

"Lord, that don't make no difference. Gettin' married is a sight easier to them that's been through it once than to others. It's surprisin' to me that she ain't been snapped up 'fore this time. She always was a likely, peart girl, an' could 'a' took her pick an' choice 'fore she married Alph. Jephson. I know one o' my boys courted her, an' I don't know but he's been doin' it again. If you ever take a notion to a widder, Mr. Pilgreen, don't sit round waitin' for her to forget her first husband. It's right nice to have such feelin's, but somebody else'll get the widder."

"I reckon that's so, Mr. Mobley."

"You'll marry 'em, will you?"

He wrestled with himself for a moment, being powerfully tempted to say that he could not on account of another appointment; but the lie stuck in his throat, and he finally said, "Yes, I'll be there."

After Mr. Mobley rode away, he sat down on an old stump to get his breath and try to piece his scattered wits together again. The blow had been terrific. He hardly realized to what he had pledged himself in promising to go and marry her to another man. Mr. Mobley had declared that she specially desired it. For what purpose? he wondered. He was too charitable to suppose that she desired to punish him. He groaned and went down on his knees there in the silent open field, and prayed when he thought of the trial before him.

And he did meet it with a dignity and courage quite touching to one witness at least, for Mr. Mobley still clung to his belief that he had penetrated the preacher's secret.

"It did 'pear hard to see him a-standin' up there givin' her away to another man," he remarked to Mrs. Mobley as they walked home.

"Why, ain't you give up that idee yet? I didn't see nothin' strange about it. He 'peared to be enjoyin' hisself very well—preachers ain't expected to be gay as other fo'ks—an' he certainly talked to Tennessee the whole endurin' evenin'."

"That was to hide his feelin's, Mis' Mobley."

Perhaps she would not have sniffed so sceptically could she have seen Mr. Pilgreen as he rode home that night. The Jephsons urged him to be their guest, but he preferred the lonely road home over the mountains. The enemy had grappled with him again, and in a form so new and strange and fearful that he thought all hell must be turned loose upon the night. He felt that he had resigned himself to the situation until he saw Meely with that other man who had won her, and who looked so exultantly on his prize and so pityingly on the rest of the world. Then he was seized with an awful desire to take him by the throat and wring out his miserable, puny life. Think of his presumption in taking her hand, in kissing her, even, before all those people, while she blushed and laughed and played with the lavender ribbons streaming from her white dress. The remembrance of the scene made the preacher clench his hands and groan, tormented with such pangs of jealousy as he had not conceived of in human experience. The savage instincts still underlying civilization and Christianity were arrayed against his soul. Afterwards he declared that he met Satan face to face that night on the mountains, and wrestled with him, as Jacob did with the angel, till break of day.

"One time the pit o' hell opened an' he came purty nigh throwin' me in, but I helt on to the thought o' the Almighty with both hands, an' I kept a-cryin' out loud for salvation to come, that I knowed nothin' in the world or the flesh could equal the reward o' the hereafter; an' then all at once I found myself lyin' on the ground that weak I could hardly lift a finger, but saved,—yes, surely saved,—an' there stood my old horse nibblin' grass on the side o' the road, an' way over the mountains I seen day a-comin'."

## II.

"AIN'T you been mistook in 'lowin' Silas was thinkin' o' some woman, Mis' Pilgreen?" Miss Emmeline Head suddenly inquired one day, when the two were having one of their confidential visits.

"I'm beginnin' to think I was," she admitted, "but he ain't been just the same."

"He's improvin' in preachin' every day."

"Yes, he is, an' a patienter, lovin'er bein' you never lived with. I have heard in a roundabout way that he was courtin' a girl over in Deer Creek Valley, but I can't think o' any woman not bein' glad to get him. He's goin' over there next Sunday to preach another funeral."

"Whose?"

"Why, it's Meely Hightower's second husband. She married a Jephson first time. I knowed some o' her fo'ks when I was a girl, an' if she's a bit like 'em she'll marry a dozen times if she gets the chance. One o' her aunts had five husbands."

"Think o' that! An' some women don't have none," mused Miss Emmeline.

"I ain't never said nothin' 'bout the Hightowers to Silas. He ain't one to take intrust in such things. He 'lows it's gossipin' 'bout our neighbors, an' it ain't accordin' to the Scripture idee o' brotherly love, but I say it does some fo'ks good to be talked about; it makes 'em behave better'n if their neighbors didn't say nothin'. Meely Hightower's husband—the second 'un, mind you—ain't been dead but three months, but I lay she'll be gettin' another 'fore the year's out."

Mr. Pilgreen had heard the account of Meely's second widowhood with complex emotions. Mr. Mobley brought the news in one of his visits.

"An' she'll be sendin' for you to preach the funeral too; mind what I say."

"Oh, I reckon not," stammered the preacher, looking down.

"Yes, she will, an' it's about time you was comin' over anyway. You ain't been since you married Silas Bates an' our Sary. You'll be a-marryin' Meely next."

"You don't think she'd take a third husband?"

"I do. She don't look a day older than she did 'fore she married this last time, an' I don't see no reason why a young woman should go sorrowin' all her days because she's had bad luck in bein' left a widow twice."

In the weeks following this conversation the preacher persuaded himself that his speculations regarding Meely's future were wholly impersonal. He had met her only two or three times during the two years of her second marriage, and then he had turned away as quickly as possible, feeling it a temptation to even look at her. But now he could think, he could look to the full desire of his heart, without a smitten conscience. He flattered himself that he no longer cared, and nourished his sympathy for her over the death of her husband, and wondered if a woman's grief could be as poignant for the loss of a second love as for a first, or if it diminished in proportion to the number of experiences. He felt very serene and sure of himself when he started over into Deer Creek Valley to obey the third call Meely had



## The Rev. Pilgreen's Wooing

made upon him. But alas for the uncertainty of human nature! No sooner did his gaze rest upon her, and he noted her widow's attire and the pensive droop of her eyelids, than all the old passionate desire for her overcame him again, and the flame of his love burned high and bright. When she gave him her hand and said,—

"You're good to come when a body's in trouble," he fervently replied,—

"I'd come to you any time."

"Little did I think two years ago it 'ud be like this, Mr. Pilgreen," and she wiped a tear from the corner of her eye.

"Death is a mighty sad thing, Mis'—er—Sawyer, an' comes to us when we least expect it."

"That's what Billy always 'lowed, an' I know he wouldn't be the one to want me to grieve over him."

Then she brightened and talked of some of the changes in the valley during those two years. There were not many, although the valley had passed through an agitated struggle with the Woman's Rights question. There had been a few marriages, among them Georgia Jephson's, but Tennessee still remained at home. With all his prejudices against gossip, Mr. Pilgreen listened and laughed with her when Meely told him some of the stories growing out of the Woman's Rights question, especially the story of the Mobleys. Away from the charm of her presence, he felt a little uneasy over it as unbecoming one of his sacred calling, but by Sunday afternoon he had made up his mind not to leave the valley until he had asked her to be his wife. He remembered what Mr. Mobley had said once about widows, and he did not intend to risk a delay again. Her husband had been dead three months, and he would give her twelve more to honor his memory if she wished, but she must give him her promise. He felt justified in hoping too, for did she not turn to him in every important crisis of her life? And what meant that soft and friendly beam of her eyes, if not encouragement?

"May I see you home, Mis' Sawyer?" he asked after the service Sunday afternoon.

"If I ain't takin' you outer your way."

"No, I'm goin' home, an' that's the highest way."

She sent the children on ahead, an act of discretion which set the preacher's heart to thumping audibly.

"Maybe you don't recollect that I walked with you once before?" he said, confused but happy.

"Oh, yes, I do," she murmured.

"Deer Creek Valley's a purty place to live," he remarked next.

"Yes," she assented, absently plucking a leaf from an overhanging bough.

"I s'pose you'd never think o' goin' anywhere else."

"La, I do go."

"To live, I mean."

"Oh!"

"Have you ever been over in our settlement?"

"No."

"I wish you'd come to see Aunt Melindy some time, an'—an'——"

At this point courage and ideas deserted him for a moment. Then one of the boys appeared in sight,—“an' bring the children.”

She laughed.

"They'd run you plum crazy in a day."

"No, they wouldn't. I'd like to have 'em with me all the time."

His voice quavered and broke; he turned his earnest eyes appealingly upon her. "Meely, can't you an' the boys come? Can't I have you all the time?"

She had thriftily raised the hem of her black gown out of the soft, deep dust of the road, but she let it fall again and stopped.

"Mr. Pilgreen!"

"Yes, I know it's suddint. I know you ain't had time to get over his loss, an' I'm not askin' you to marry me all at once. I'll wait long as you want me to, a year if you say so, but bein' as I 'lowed to ask you before, an' didn't get the chance 'cause I waited so long, it 'peared to me I ought to speak this time 'fore it was too late. Honey, there ain't no tellin' how much I love you, an' I'll treat the boys same as they were mine."

Her answer seemed long in coming, so long that suspense would not let him wait. He pressed closer to her, tried to take her hand and look into her face, emboldened and urged onward by the intensity of his feelings.

"Meely, Meely, you ain't mad with me?"

"No, oh, no, but I'm mighty sorry, Mr. Pilgreen, I'm sure. I'm promised."

"Promised, Meely?—promised not to marry any more?"

"No, I'm promised already to marry Eli Mobley. He—he asked me last Sunday."

When Mr. Pilgreen rode by the Jephsons' that afternoon on his way home, he looked neither to the right nor to the left, so he missed seeing Tennessee's pale freckled face at the small front window. But she watched him until he passed out of sight, then laid her head down upon the window-sill, weeping softly.

"I could 'a' told him how it 'ud be. I knowed long ago—long ago. She loves 'em all. I—I love only him. Why couldn't it 'a' been so he'd 'a' loved me? Why couldn't it?"

# BRIDGING THE DEPTHS

*By Percie W. Hart*



ONE may have been quite a sea-traveller and never have happened upon a certain most important type of nautical craft. She is a steamer with something of a hybrid appearance, having the paint and boats of a warship or yacht, the model of a small liner, together with a certain air of trampish recklessness in her movements. In addition to all this, her decks appear to be unduly crowded with machinery of many sorts, her bulwarks are adorned with huge funnel-shaped objects, and she has odd arrangements like big pulley-wheels projecting from bow and stern. Such a craft is what is technically known as a "cable-laying and repair shop,"—in other words, a lineman of the ocean.

At the present time there are about forty-two such specially constructed and equipped vessels employed in laying and caring for the telegraphic cables of the world. That this number must be considerably augmented by the recent colonial acquisitions of the United States can be thoroughly appreciated when the necessity of prompt communication between all parts of a governed territory is considered. Until very recently the United States has had no outlying dependencies or territories (save Alaska), and, consequently, no particular urgency for cables or cable-ships. With the new era now dawning, however, this condition of affairs must be changed, and already some of the improvised transports have been, and are being, used or adapted for the functions of cable repairing, to supply the pressing needs until special craft can be acquired or constructed.

The cables of the world aggregate about one hundred and eighty thousand nautical miles. While the bulk of this is the property of private companies, something in the neighborhood of twenty thousand miles is owned or actively controlled by the different colonial powers. The British Empire and France have about five and eight thousand miles respectively, Germany two thousand, and Italy one thousand. Spain was credited with seventeen hundred miles, but a considerable proportion of this must now appertain to the United States.

The laying of a cable across an ocean is not nearly so simple a matter as might appear at first thought. There are a number of things to be taken into account. The enormous weight of any considerable

length of cable (say, for instance, sufficient to reach from Hawaii to an island of the Ladrões, or what would be only one division in a direct cable between the United States and the Philippines) is an important factor. The Great Eastern was able to carry enough for the whole distance between Valentia, Ireland, and Heart's Content, Newfoundland, and successfully laid it after two attempts. But this is not so great a distance as our illustration, and, moreover, modern cables differ from their predecessors in being made much heavier and in varied types to meet certain conditions. What is known as "deep-sea cable" weighs about two tons to the mile, while the inshore variety weighs fourteen tons to the mile. There are other intermediate grades. Instead of using monstrous vessels, it has been found expedient to lay long-distance cables in sections.

So that we may properly appreciate the subject, let us imagine ourselves on board of a typical cable-ship engaged in actual work.

We find a first-class vessel in all respects, with uniformed officers and crew, strict discipline maintained, and every other feature of expert navigation. In addition to all this, we can quickly note the unique attributes specially suited for her distinctive field of effort. To begin at the very mainspring of the whole, we find the cable coiled away in big iron tanks, situated in what would be the hold of a cargo ship. These tanks are from thirty to forty feet in diameter, and are connected with one another by "ways," or "troughs," through which transfers can readily be made when occasion requires. The numerous machines upon deck are necessary for the proper handling of the heavy cargo, and their power can better be appreciated later. The big, funnel-like objects lining the bulwarks in places are buoys, useful in marking locations. We soon discover that the ship has really three crews or departments, each with its separate chiefs and officers. Nevertheless, they must all work in harmony, one with another, or things will go wrong. There is the steamship crew,—captain, engineers, mates, quartermasters, stokers, deck-hands, cooks, and stewards,—but even these men must be experienced in the special difficulties of navigation and labor with which they have to contend. Then there is a certain corps who have to do with the actual cable laying, picking up, buoying, etc., although, quite naturally, they are aided by the rest as occasion demands. Last of all on our list (but certainly not in importance) are the electricians, charged with the testing and calculating, which must go on continuously while the ship is at work in order to prevent costly mistakes.

Our ship has already laid some sections of cable from either shore, and is now on her way with a fresh cargo to supply the gap between. Out in mid-ocean, hundreds of miles from land and perhaps a thousand miles apart, are two groups of buoys. These designate the sub-

merged ends of the long wire ropes. Our first destination is the nearer of the two. Expert action must commence at once. No ordinary navigating calculations will be economical enough to quickly discover those tiny specks in the great expanse of water. A trifling variation in the chronometers, for instance, might set the ship to a week or ten days of tiresome cruising. Ordinary navigation is intended for ordinary needs, most certainly not to discover pin-points in a blanket. In addition, then, to the usual calculations and instruments, observations are taken from certain stars and the moon, if possible; and as the suspected neighborhood draws near the deep-sea lead is kept going, bringing up specimens of the bottom, and at the same time recording known depths. And, of course, the lookouts are as keen as naval jackies when on watch for a coming enemy. As in most other pursuits, the specialist becomes an adept in his chosen line. The navigating captains of these cable craft very often steam away over the wilderness of ocean and stop in sight of their buoys with all the precision of a man halting at a well-known street-crossing.

And so, after days or weeks or months, as the case may be, of ordinary sea-voyaging, we sight our quarry, and the whole ship's company takes on a bustle and air of preparation for what is to come. No man who loves his ease should adopt the profession of cable-laying. It is the hardest of work, and must be performed under all kinds of trying and disadvantageous circumstances. One need only to have witnessed a boat's crew, clad in glistening oilskins and clumsy life-belts, their frail craft leaping and throwing herself about like a mad thing in the running seas, striving to attach hoisting tackles to the huge and slippery-wet marking buoys, in order to appreciate a single phase of this many-sided subject. Sometimes it seems well-nigh impossible for them to succeed, but, watching their chance, a couple of the men will actually jump for the uncertain object, and, once securing a foothold, crawl about upon its projecting ring-bolts and ledges like veritable simians. Down in the cable-tanks aboardship, also, clearing the line as it pays out through the troughs connecting with the deck machinery above, alert and oftentimes both hard and hazardous labor is unceasingly required. All ropes, even such ones as heavily wired cables, are liable to suddenly kink or tangle in uncoiling. This would, of course, be a special catastrophe in cable-laying, involving not only liability to parting the line, tearing machines to pieces, and costly delay in the work, but also a probable killing or maiming of the exposed toilers about the deck. But we must leave further consideration of the possibilities in the way of danger and difficulty which this combination of enormous weight-handling, intricate machinery, and sea-dangers has brought forth.

A little distance off our quarter we can see the big buoys, tossed

about like corks by the boisterous waves. But something has gone wrong. These are only the "markers." The main buoy, the one to which the cable-end had been actually attached, is missing.

"Swept away in a storm, most likely," a good-natured officer observes for our benefit. "That's why we always put out 'markers.' Some of them are bound to hold."

It now becomes necessary to rake over the bottom of the ocean and recover the sunken end. In such great depths of water this is no slight task, but our veteran cable-crew make nothing of it. Unless the weather conditions are specially unfavorable (and what seems like a heavy gale to a landsman is merely smiled at by your bronzed witness of a thousand real storms) the work is at once commenced.

A truly wonderful piece of mechanism is the "picking-up" machine used in all grappling and cable-hoisting operations. It is a powerful variety of the common steam-winch family, but also a most aristocratic and elaborate member, fitted with gear-changing clutches, patent brakes, and other ingenious appliances. To give some idea of its capabilities in dry figures, it can at slow speed lift twenty-five tons at a rate of one mile per hour, or at fast speed ten knots at the rate of four miles per hour. Moreover, it can be quickly altered and adapted to changing circumstances in speed or lifting weight.

All being made ready, the big grapnel, attached to seven or eight hundred fathoms of chain and rope, is passed over the bow-sheave, or pulley, and as soon as it reaches bottom the ship is sent slowly ahead. Back and forward across the path of the cable, as pointed out by the friendly marking-buoys, we steam. Several times the grapnel catches something, only to lose its hold again,—probably an inequality upon the bottom, although a bosun's mate mumbles "mermaid's grottos,"—but at last comes a steady strain. Every soul on board hangs over the bow, watching the grimy grapnel-rope coming steadily up and over the well-oiled pulley. At length the grapnel itself appears, holding tight on to the truant. The hoisting ceases. Men swarm down and attach derrick falls upon either side of the point where the grapnel holds. Next, the cable is cut between the stops, and both ends are hauled aboard. Quickly the instruments are connected, and from out on the ocean flashes the message which informs the grave officials in the metropolis that all is going well. For some little while communications are brisk, as those upon the ship send word to expectant wives and families, or receive advice of happenings in the busy world that have transpired since they last left port. But after the first flurry the routine is resumed, and the electricians left to toil away uninterruptedly at their monotonous keys and resistance plugs.

The cut end of the cable, perhaps a mile or so in length, is hauled aboard and stowed away. Meanwhile the main body of the crew are busily engaged in splicing the short cable to an end of the tank cargo.

In order to appreciate this delicate operation, a few words in regard to the modern construction of ocean cables become necessary. In the very centre is the core, the real life-blood of the whole, as it were, comprising the conductor, made of a strand of copper wires covered with some such insulating material as gutta-percha or india-rubber, so as to prevent the escape of the electric fluid. Over this is a layer of jute yarn, serving as a protection from the next jacket of steel wires; over which in turn come more jute yarn, bituminous compounds, and heavier steel wires. The courses of this outside sheathing vary according to the type, inshore cable having many more than the deep-sea variety, on account of extra susceptibility to danger from ship's anchors, chafing, and tides. In all types, however, the inner core is the same. To make the splice properly, the outer sheathing is laid back so that when the core has been joined the steel wires, relaid, will overlap the joint for seven or eight feet upon either side. The two ends of the conductor are carefully filed clean and firmly soldered together. A small amount of a certain mysterious compound (supposed to be a mixture of Stockholm tar and gutta-percha) is applied and worked with a hot iron so as to leave no fugitive air spaces. The ends of the gutta-percha covering are heated and drawn until they meet about the middle of the exposed conductor. Next come bandages of softened gutta-percha and a bath of ice-water to quickly harden them. The outer sheathings are laboriously replaced by hand as well as may be. Over the whole long splice a heavy tarred jute yarn is tightly served, and the job is finished.

Next follow more electrical tests, messages being sent through the whole cable cargo and recently spliced section to the mainland, and, all being found in perfect order, we are ready to proceed. The cable is threaded through the various guiding and friction sheaves, under the pulley of the strain-measuring dynamometer, and out over the big stern wheel. The stops are let go, engines started, the ship moves ahead, and the cable begins paying out astern and sinking to its gloomy resting-place.

There seems to be no logical reason why cables cannot be laid across any section of the oceans of the world, no matter how great the depth. Some portions of the Atlantic cables are over three miles below the surface, and this is not necessarily the extreme depth, for the cable may, and probably does, pass from the top of one submarine hill to another without drooping materially into the deep valleys between. The greatest known depth of the sea is forty thousand two hundred and thirty-six feet, or seven and three-fifths miles, found in the South Atlantic about midway between the island of Tristan d'Acunha and the mouth of the Rio de la Plata. Soundings have been made to the depth of twenty-seven thousand four hundred and eighty feet in the North Atlantic, south of Newfoundland, and about thirty-four thou-

sand feet, or nearly six and a half miles, is reported south of the Bermudas. Even such enormous depths as these need not hinder cable-laying, so far as the theory is concerned, but in practice, for reasons of economy in maintenance and otherwise, it is found best to take advantage of favoring conditions in the ocean's bed. To illustrate, all of the cables between the United States and Europe run up along our coast until they reach the neighborhood of Newfoundland before starting across to their destinations in Ireland or France. The reason for this is found in the range of submarine table-lands, forming an ideal cable-bed, which lies between the three latter countries. In past years immense portions of this submerged territory have been plotted out and mapped by various governmental and private expeditions, and this knowledge is constantly being added to. It becomes particularly valuable in economic cable-laying. Except in extreme cases, the electrical conductor is not dropped overboard hap-hazard. On the contrary, the submarine mountains, valleys, and plains over which it is to take its sinuous course are accurately selected beforehand, and their general configuration, soil-covering, if any, and other peculiarities properly taken into consideration. Special varieties of cable are manufactured to meet certain conditions known to exist where they are to go. Like men in all trades, the cable-layers must adhere closely to the specifications given them at starting in order to perform the right kind of work.

The steamship, therefore, while going ahead and paying out the cable over the stern pulley, is under the guidance of skilled hands, following a certain path, which has been pointed out for her by sages on the mainland as being the best adapted for the comfort and ease of the electrical conductor she is depositing.

To readers who appreciate the uncertainties of ocean navigation, with its calms and storms, its fogs and lowering cloud-banks, this detail will come home very closely. Of course the steamship has the compasses, sextants, chronometers, and charts of ordinary navigation upon the high seas; but these are merely supplemental from the point of view of the cable-layer. As has been intimated, he aims to measure by feet and inches, and not by approximate miles. I must not omit mention of a couple of the ingenious instruments which have been evolved for this purpose.

The elaborate deep-sea lead, quickly lowered and hoisted by means of its reels of pianoforte wire, announces the depth, and the grease-filled cavity upon its underside brings up samples of the bottom. These two combined clues usually make identification of the locality an easy matter. There is also what is known as the "James submarine sentry and sounding machine." This is a device called a "kite," trailed astern at any required depth. Should the bottom grow shallower and touch the "kite," it immediately releases one of its fastenings, and in so doing rings various bells up on board of the ship.



## 128 To a Dying Bee—What are the Great Stars

In due time we come in sight of the second cluster of buoys. Boats are lowered, tackles made fast, and that end of the cable brought aboard. For a brief space the ship becomes a focal point of news from two continents. Then, having passed the final tests, the two ends are carefully spliced together, the retaining stoppers cut, and the great wire rope disappears in the depths. The cable is laid. Another bridge has been thrown across an ocean.



### TO A DYING BEE

BY ALOYSIUS COLL

WE are twin-spirits, fit to understand  
Each other's sorrow—you a dying bee,  
Drowsy and numb upon the grass, and I  
The ashes of a dream that burned in me.

When summer sent you booming down the dune,  
Thirsting, you came unto a flower new  
And seeming sweet. You sipped your heart's desire—  
And lo, the nectar was a poison-dew!

When summer sent me singing down the moor,  
I found a wilding lily, and her breath  
Was woman's witchery. I thought it sweet—  
Aye, sweetened wormwood, and the dregs were death.

We are twin-spirits, cheated by a sign  
Of venom gilded with a shallow gleam,—  
You drowsy from the poisoned honey, I  
Awake to the deception of a dream.

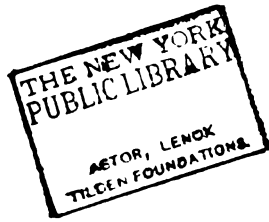


### WHAT ARE THE GREAT STARS, WHITE AND BLUE

BY BLISS CARMAN

WHAT are the great stars, white and blue,  
Sparkling along the twilight there?  
They are the dewy gems let fall  
When I loosed your hair.

What is the great, pale, langorous moon  
On the floor of the sea alone?  
That is the yellow rose let fall  
When I loosed your zone.



# NEW SAMARIA

BY

S. WEIR MITCHELL, M.D.

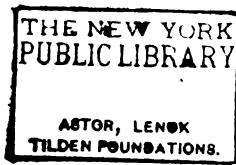
AUTHOR OF "HUGH WYNNE, FREE QUAKER," "FRANÇOIS,"  
"CIRCUMSTANCE," ETC.



PHILADELPHIA  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY  
1902

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**PRINTED BY J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY, PHILADELPHIA, U. S. A.**



VOL. LXX

NUMBER 416

# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

AUGUST, 1902



## NEW SAMARIA

BY S. WEIR MITCHELL, M.D.

*Author of "Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker," "François," "Circumstance," etc.*

THIS is what happened to me in July, 1873. It chanced in the middle of a prosperous and easy life, in which, as a banker, I had doubled the property left to me, an only child. My days had been free from money cares, and were in all other ways what might be called uneventful and happy.

In looking back over the unlucky incidents I here record I fail to see what better I could have done. One of the three or four people who have read this story of my sudden isolation thinks I might have found sooner some way of relief. I leave the reader to decide.

The West was not the West of to-day. Travel was more difficult, the post slow, the telegraph a new means of communication.

In 1871 I became the unwilling owner of certain mines in Arkansas. They had brought ruin to two owners, and I went to the West to see what I could do with them. I told my people not to write until they heard from me, and that I should be gone three or four weeks.

On July 3, twenty miles from my destination, New Samaria, I left the unfinished railway, and on July 4 took the stage early in the morning. To my disgust, my baggage had been missing at the station. A too sanguine station-master "reckoned it would turn up soon," and I went away annoyed, anticipating the discomfort of being without a change of clothes. My trunk did turn up a month later.

I reached the new town of New Samaria at noon. I had a horrible meal, and, evidently by reason of my being without baggage, was not very cordially received. It did not trouble me. Being rather energetic, I meant to lose no time, and, without stating my errand, asked to be driven out to the mines, some twelve miles distant.

When the driver appeared with a good-looking horse and buggy he was distinctly drunk. I tried to find the landlord; he was absent. A sympathetic bystander said the road was plain, better to drive myself. Dismissing my driver, I received a pretty clear statement that I was to follow the main road to the bridge, which was under repair. Then I was to turn to the left and go along the river road to another bridge a mile away. After that it was a plain road, "no fellow could miss it."

As I was about to get into the wagon a tall man touched my arm, a liberty I always dislike. He began to tell a woful tale of how he was out of work, never had begged, would I—and so on. I said, "Oh, go and get work. I never give to beggars."

He said,—and I thought it queer,—“I wish to thunder I hadn’t asked you.”

He did look pretty well used up, but I was still in a state of vexation about my baggage, and so I got in and drove away. I was saluted at the hill-top by a pack of fire-crackers, and that and the poor devil’s face were the last things I remember.

When I was re-born to slowly improving consciousness it was to recognize the place I was in as new and the light as dim. I recall my first puzzle as to whether it was morning or evening. I concluded that the change of light would soon tell me, and was pleased at my own intelligence. By degrees the light increased, and with it the knowledge of my condition. My head was bandaged and I was now and then a little giddy, especially if I turned over in bed. My right hand also was bandaged. By degrees I saw that I was in a large, white-washed room in one of six beds. It was close and not over clean. My pillow smelt horribly. Two other patients were snoring. By and by came a young woman neatly clad in gray linen. She said, "Oh, you are better; how do you feel?"

I said feebly, being still rather dazed, "Thank you, I am very weak and giddy."

"Well, you are out of danger, the doctor says. You have been very bad."

"Pardon me," said I, "are you the nurse?"

"Yes."

"May I ask your name?"

"Why, yes; my name's Jane Wright."

"And I am in—well,—in—a—hospital?"

"Yes, but here's the doctor. I will fetch your breakfast pretty soon."

The doctor was young and, as I found, positive. I was becoming curious, and was beginning to feel a little more secure of my power to think and to speak.

"Oh, you are all right to-day," said the doctor. "Any headache?"

"No, but I have more or less vertigo if I turn over suddenly."

"Then don't turn over. If you keep quiet, you will be about able to go out when we close for repairs on the fourteenth."

"May I ask, my dear doctor, how long I have been here?"

"Since July 4, and this is the 10th." He turned to leave me.

"Indeed! A week. Pardon me if I detain you a moment. What happened to me? I have lost nearly a week. It is an absolute blank."

"You want to know what happened? You started out after a Fourth of July frolic to drive over a bridge with no flooring. You were pretty well set up."

"What! I was drunk! Do they say that?"

"They do. A man tried to stop the horse. He succeeded, but there was a smash, and you got a crack on the head, and he broke his leg. The horse had to be shot, and the wagon was in tooth-picks."

"Well," I said, "this is an amazing tale. I was drunk, you say?"

"Yes, so they say. I wasn't there."

"It strikes me as comical."

"Does it? Your idea of a joke is unusual. Wait till you see the man who let you have his horse."

"I presume, sir, that I can pay for it."

"Well, for a fellow that did what you did that is rather cool. You had better keep quiet. In three days I can let you go."

I said, "Wait a little, doctor; there is some queer mistake. I am—I am George Woodburn, of the banking firm of Woodburn & Caruthers, Wall Street. Where is my purse? It was in my inside breast-pocket. There are cards in it."

"Purse? There was no purse."

"And my watch,—a gold repeater?"

The doctor said, "My good man, you are either off your head a bit or else you are playing a little game. It won't do. I have no time to waste. Best keep still. If you get excited, you will only be the worse for it."

The situation was really so odd that as he moved away I laughed outright. This hurt my head, and I reflected that his last advice was good. I said no more until the nurse came with milk and bread and butter, when I asked her, "Miss Wright, have I been here a week?"

"Yes."

"Was I much hurt?"

"Yes,—a cut on the head and one on the cheek. But you got off pretty well—dislocated thumb and sprained wrist."

"The doctor was in a hurry. He should have heard more patiently what I have to say. He seems to me rather positive."

"Oh, that's because he always knows."

"Indeed! How could he know about me? I do assure you, my good nurse, that he is strangely mistaken."

"I wouldn't excite myself if I were you." Miss Wright seemed unwilling to discuss the doctor's opinions.

"Thank you," I said. "No doubt the advice is good, but it is somewhat necessary that I should communicate with my people and settle all this nonsense as to what I am. It is rather amusing to be taken for a tramp by that doctor."

"Oh, he only says what everyone says. Mind, I don't say it. I told him it was nonsense; that tramps did not talk the kind of way you do. I don't know what you are, but you're no tramp."

"Many thanks, Miss Wright, and kindly tell me what else is said of me. It is interesting."

"Oh, it's all in the *New Samaria Herald*. Mr. Smile (that's the landlord) says you are in with a lot of policy men."

"That is agreeable. Is it really the case that my purse and watch are gone?"

"Well, we couldn't find a cent, or anything to say who you were. Your socks were marked with initials. We wanted to know, because we thought you were going to die."

"One can do that without having a name. Does your doctor never believe a man in a hospital?"

"Yes, of course. Now eat your breakfast. In a day or two you will be able to go out. I must go; and don't you worry."

I asked for the paper, which she said she would fetch.

I lay quiet all that day. Here was a pleasing scrape. I was weak, alone, presumed to be a scamp, without a cent, in a Western town where no one knew me. However, I was glad to have been so well cared for, and, after all, when once I was up and dressed I could easily arrange matters.

The next morning my head felt clearer, and I began to consider my surroundings with more care. I sat up after a breakfast of milk and bread and observed that I was No. 5. My only near neighbor was No. 6. He was a man under thirty and had red hair, which was cut short and stood up straight from the scalp.

I said, "Excuse me; do you mind talking to me a little?"

"No. I meant to, but until two days ago you have been raving about mines and buying houses."

"Is that so? Thank Heaven, I am getting better; pretty soon I shall be able to get out and settle things, and reward all these good people who have been taking care of me."

"Well, you are a cool hand," said No. 6. "The landlord says you were drunk, and my advice to you is to get away quietly out of this town. I wish to Heaven I had never set eyes on you."

"May I ask what you mean?"

"Mean! I caught your horse. He was going for the bridge. In a moment you would have been a gone man."

"Then I really owe you both an apology and gratitude. But no one told me who or what my neighbor was, and so you have gone unthanked. I am most grateful."

"Oh, that's all very well. But here I am with a leg broken and laid by for six or eight weeks, and my salary stopped."

"That's pretty hard; but in a few days, when I get out of this place, I hope to satisfy you that your sacrifice has not been in vain."

My neighbor laughed. "By George! The doctor says you *can* talk, and that is all there is of you."

"So the doctor has been gossiping. Upon my word, you and he are oddly mistaken."

"Oh, shut up!" said No. 6. "I know your kind."

"I cannot reply to a man who saved my life as I would to another, but as you seem unwilling to believe me, may I ask one other question?"

"Oh, yes. What is it?"

"Who brought me here?"

"Oh, some circus chaps picked you up."

Then I understood where had gone my purse, watch, and, as it proved, my trunk-check and cigar-case.

"Well," I said, "I will not trouble you further. You will find out some day that you have made a mistake about me. I can very well understand why you feel as you do."

"Oh, gammon," said No. 6. "I've had all I want to hear. I am laid by for two months and I have to pay a fellow to clerk for me in the bank. Suppose you quit talking to me."

I said, "Very well, as you like."

After this I began to reflect, and when I put myself in the place of No. 6 I knew that I should have been equally sceptical. At the same time I felt a certain amused interest as to how my too unusual situation would end. The next day No. 6 was removed, as I heard, to his own home. I learned that his name was Thomas Sedgeley. He seemed to have recovered his temper, for as they lifted him he repeated the advice he had given me as to leaving town, and seemed to take in me the kind of half interest to which an act of self-devotion seems to pledge a man. His removal left me with no one to talk to except the doctor, who had made so decided a moral diagnosis, and the nurse, who was both civil and kind.

The day of my first talk with Miss Jane she brought me the paper she had promised, but it was not until much later that I could read. Until then my sight was doubled, and any effort to fix my attention



caused a return of giddiness. I put the paper under my pillow and waited until I could learn with more ease what New Samaria thought of me.

The second day I asked for pen, ink, and paper, but my right hand was sadly cut and sprained, and I could not write a word. Miss Jane said she would write for me. I dictated a note asking my partner to arrange for a credit at the National Bank of New Samaria for ten thousand dollars. The little woman looked up in amazement.

"Ten thousand?" said she.

I said, "Yes, that is correct."

She evidently regarded it as a dishonest attempt to impress her with the belief that I was really what I had said I was. I added, "If you think a little, my good nurse, you will see that my writing a letter to New York could do me no good with people here; kindly finish it." She said no more.

I knew that my letter could not bring me a reply for a week, and that no means I could employ would put me at once in easy circumstances. In any case I should have to be identified before I could get money. It must have been several days before I was able to think clearly, or else I might sooner have seen my way. But, as I have said, for some time, even before I left the hospital, and for some days afterwards, all effort to concentrate attention confused me and gave rise to vertigo. I finished my letter with a brief statement of my having had a slight accident to my hand: this to explain a signature which did excite much comment in the home office. Then I told my nurse that I must ask the charity of a three-cent stamp. When she returned with it I said, smiling: "You have made an investment. What will be the interest for one month on a three-cent stamp?" She said I must still be off my head, and again advised quiet. I had evidently damaged the good opinion she had had of me. However, that could not be helped, and so the letter was directed and sent.

Reflecting upon what had passed, I was somewhat surprised that quiet talk and civil ways should have affected so little the people with whom I had come into contact. In fact, it made some of them suspicious, but to none did it bring conviction, as I was soon to learn.

Two days went by, and I was told that I was well enough to go out. I was really quite unfit to leave; but what else could I do? This was July 14. I was advised to live on milk and vegetables and to avoid the sun; best not to try to use my right hand for a week or two. It was pleasingly vague. In fact, I was eager to get out and settle my difficulties. A screen was set up and I was left to dress. I was appalled. My neat gray travelling suit was ragged, muddied, and blood-stained. My felt hat was torn half across. When I contrived to clothe myself I

asked for a needle and thread and tried to repair certain rents. It resulted in sewing my pantaloons to my drawers.

The little ward was now empty and the doctor gone on a fishing holiday. After I had been up and dressed an hour the nurse came with my usual diet of bread and milk. It was certainly good for me, but not otherwise desirable, as I disliked milk.

I stuffed the unread *Herald* into my pocket, said good-by to Miss Jane, and, a little giddy, went down a narrow hall-way to the street. I looked up and down the road. It was very hot, and few people were out-of-doors. I remember saying to myself, "Shall I go to the right or to the left?" when suddenly I remembered that I was penniless. Although I was still seriously weak, the comic element of my situation was at times uppermost in my mind. It was plain that for a very few days I must manage to live by my wits—but how? Work I could not. Returning, I rang the bell. The door was opened by Miss Jane.

I said: "You are very hard people. I am not fit to go out."

"I am very sorry, but what can I do?"

"That is my question too. No one believes me to be a man by accident left without money. I don't think I would believe it. I never did believe beggar stories; but you do know I am a man without home, without money, and too weak to work. I want you to give me half a dollar."

"I can't give you that much; I will give you a quarter."

"I'm right sorry—I ought to have thought. I should have asked you to lend me that amount." I realized then and there the tremendous gap between competence and the outstretched hand of want. For a moment the sense of humiliation was immense; nevertheless, I took the coin and said: "That makes twenty-eight cents in all. You believe me a tramp or worse, but kindly tell me where I shall go to get a bed. Even tramps must sleep." Upon this she drew out another quarter and said: "I just ought not, but I must. Someone will feed and lodge you for fifty cents. We'd keep you along till you got strong, but we shut up to-morrow for repairs. I am awful sorry."

I thanked her. I looked back as I moved away. She was watching me. I was glad to find, as I walked on in the cooling twilight, that I was better of my vertigo. That I was a notable object was soon made clear to me. Some boys jeered at me. I went to the telegraph office. Here I asked the clerk to send a night message to my partner.

"Arrange credit at New Samaria bank at once; am without funds. C.O.D."

"GEORGE WOODBURN."

The clerk declined. He was civil, but firm. He glanced at my pantaloons, and the hat confirmed his judgment. No, I had to confess

that I had no abode in New Samaria and no money. A paid telegram was beyond my means. I gave that up. Again I was grimly amused. I said, "This town thinks I am a tramp or a gambler, and so do you."

"I do."

"Well, I am worth about three millions. Suppose you bet the cost of a telegram on the chance of its being true. Think not? Much obliged."

I went out. Looking back is instructive; my friend was gayly relating the tale. I hesitated where next I should go, but, still satisfied that my language and manners must be such as to get me a quiet hearing, I turned and walked to the tavern where my calamities had begun. I found the owner even too easily. At first he did not know me. When I began to defend myself by stating my case he poured out a series of epithets which at once disposed of my modest hopes of a lodging, and taking me by the arm dragged me out and threw me on the sidewalk. I was too feeble to resist. My hurt arm was no better for the treatment. Sore and furious, and dirtier than ever, I staggered to my feet, and after a little sat down in the dusk on a doorstep. A grizzled, mangy cur, clearly a canine tramp, loafed across the street, and recognizing me as a comrade, put his nose in my hand, and finally sat down to await my pleasure. Then came a man, the owner of the house, and kicked the dog and told me to get up and move on. I obeyed, the dog following me.

My sense of the comic was fast leaving me. I went into a drug-shop and asked where the president of the bank lived. The man in charge said it was a mile out of town, and I was told the way. Then I said I was just out of the hospital and weak; could I rest a little.

"Why, yes."

I sat down. He asked where I came from.

"New York."

"What's your business?"

"Banker." I related my story.

Then the man said: "I wouldn't make it all so big. You ought to write novels."

"I knew you would not believe me."

"I don't, and I've got to shut up."

Then I moved on again and kept moving, like a famous boy in a certain novel. I walked out of the town in the darkness, and on to a country road, feeling better and wishing I had a cigar. At last I got over a fence and found a lot of heaps of hay. On one of these I lay down, thankful for the warmth of a July night. I slept well, and, waking at dawn, saw a man standing in front of me. I knew him at once. It was the man who had begged of me as I was entering my ill-fated wagon. He had a rake in his hand.

"Halloa," he said, "better get up. The boss will be along, and he's rough on tramps."

I rose with some difficulty. The man gave me a hand and said: "You look right bad. What's wrong?"

I told him I had been hurt and was just out of a hospital. He did not recognize me, which was not surprising. The notion came to me that I would see if a fellow-tramp would believe me. I said, "If I tell you a queer story, will you think it is a lie?"

"Why should I?"

"I am not a tramp. I am a rich man, but no one here believes it."

"Well, why not? I was rich once. I had five thousand dollars once."

"Indeed! And it is all gone?"

"Oh, yes, old story,—bad years, mortgage on farm, and busted. No work and took to wandering. I got a job ten days ago. When you get that fortune back do you remember Thad Petersen. Got any money?"

"No."

"Well, here's ten cents." I took it. Once he had asked charity of me; I had answered, "No;" now he it was who gave unasked. I thanked him, and as I walked away he cried after me: "Round the turn there's a house. There's a right nice woman lives there; guess she'll give you a bite."

I went on. I began to see how hard it was to tell a true story so as to be believed. I concluded that, as I meant to make my tongue secure my breakfast, I would fall back upon fiction. I went up to the open door of the little cottage and smelt tobacco. This had the double effect of making me greatly want to smoke and of assuring me that a man was within, and that I was, therefore, less secure of a meal than I should have been without the too critical charity of my own sex. I knocked with the timidity of the hungry. A very young woman came out of the back room. "What is it?" she said.

I replied: "I am an unfortunate man just out of hospital. I have a wife and nine children; the youngest is blind and my wife is sick."

"Poor thing. How old is she?"

"About twenty-five."

This seemed to strike the woman as comical. She laughed aloud. "Well, you are certainly a very lively liar. Aren't you the man that got drunk and drove poor Mr. Smile's horse into a circus and broke my husband's leg, and told him you were a banker and worth three millions? Oh, dear, but you can fib, and you don't do it well. I could fib better, and oh my! that poor wife and nine children at twenty-five years of age!"

Upon this she fell into a chair and laughed herself into prodigality

of tears. At last she said: "Wait a bit. It won't keep. It's too big a joke. I'll fetch you some milk and bread, but I must tell Tom first."

With this she fled, laughing as she went. Then I laughed too and sat down on the stone steps, relieved to know that my comrade in calamity was incapable of active hostility. When the woman came back she was so ashake with this cherished joke that the milk was spilling over.

"Good Heavens!" I said, "don't spill that milk."

"Well," she said, "it's my milk I do suppose."

Humility and hunger suggested a modest "Yes, Ma'am." I swallowed the milk and bread while she stood and watched me. "Would you like more?"

"Yes, Ma'am."

She went away and came back with a pitcher of milk and a half-loaf of bread, and again studied my performance with amused curiosity. I thanked her warmly and was about to journey on when it occurred to me to further test this amiable, merry woman.

I said, "How would you like to lend me five dollars?"

"Not at all. Five dollars, and Tom in bed for weeks! You must really think me a fool. What would you do with five dollars?"

"I should get a good dinner, smoke a good cigar, and wire to New York."

"To that lady of twenty-five years old, the mother of nine? Now, I would. She'll be right anxious."

I was fed and rested and gay—sure soon to be altogether at ease. I laughed and said: "Suppose I were to tell you my true story. It would be worth—now, what would it be worth?"

"Well, twenty-five cents."

She put it in my ready palm. "I promise you a true story. I am a rich man; I am here on business. I was never drunk in my life. The horse was frightened and ran away; the rest I do not remember. I lost my purse, watch, and cigar-case."

She shook her head. "Do rich people travel without baggage?"

I added the sad tale of a lost and stolen check. Then I said, "It sounds too complete, doesn't it?"

"No. A liar and a tramp would have been more cunning. You are not a real tramp. You may be worse, or better. Any way, you look worse than Tom."

"Suppose on the faith of your doubt you invest to the extent of a dollar. It might pay."

"You are no tramp, that's sure, and if you are lying or not I cannot tell. Wait a little." She was back in a moment. "Tom says he doesn't believe a word of it, but that you must be pretty badly off, and I was to say he was sorry (I am too), and to give you a dollar."

I took it, well pleased, saying, "You ought to tell me not to get drunk on it."

"I was going to."

"People usually do. I have done it often," I said, as I was about to leave her. "You have been really very good to me. It is unfortunate that no one believes me, but that does not alter my obligation to you. Some day you will be thankful that you fed a hungry man."

"But I am always thankful for that."

I said, "Good-morning, Madam."

"Oh! good-by."

I went away down the road with the remnants of my loaf, missing the dog, who had left me the night before to forage for himself. The air was cooler, the country pleasant. I wandered into by-roads, or sat and considered ways and means of bettering myself. I did steal four pears (they were lying near the road). I watched some boys fishing in a mill-race and gave useful sporting advice. One of them presented me with an aged apple, a russet. After they had gone I sat down by the mill-stream, ate a little stale bread, and—from habit—feeling for the absent luxury of a handkerchief, became aware of the newspaper in my breast-pocket. It was only a fragment—a small half-sheet. I settled myself on the grass with some curiosity as to this bit of biography. I still have the paper. It ran thus:

#### "OVERWHELMING CATASTROPHE.

##### "DRUNKEN HORSE-THIEF—ATTEMPT TO STEAL MR. JOSEPH SMILE'S MARE.

"Yesterday a man without baggage arrived at the Washington Hotel and hired a man to drive him to the mines. He got rid of the driver on some pretext and drove himself down the hill. There he collided with the Boss Elephant of the circus, smashed the wagon, killed the mare and a monkey, lamed a zebra, and broke his own head. Our distinguished young financier, Mr. Thomas Sedgeley, the cashier of the bank, stopped the horse and saved the life of the horse-thief at the cost to himself of a broken leg. The circus people carried both men to the poorhouse hospital.

"Mr. Smile has the sympathy of his fellow-townsmen. The man may recover. His injuries probably saved him from the prompt punishment of a justly infuriated community. Mr. Sedgeley is doing well."

I began to see, as I read this over, that my future in New Samaria was not to be unclouded. Assuredly, as a statement of facts, the report lacked accuracy, but if a newspaper were always accurate, what would there be left to say next day?

On this Saturday evening I went back to the town and spent thirty cents on a luxurious supper. I bought two two-cent cigars and a box of sulphur matches, and then returned to the country and my hay-heap

hotel. No tobacco was ever so good. About nine next day, being Sunday, I smoked my second cigar and counted my cash:

50 cents from the nurse  
10 cents from Petersen  
25 cents from Mrs. Tom  
100 cents from ditto

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Total, \$1.85

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Of this thirty cents had gone to sustain life and four cents to make it cheerful. I could have wired to New York, but then I must live, and it seemed well that I should keep up my strength, and my hunger was that of a convalescent.

As I sauntered into town this Sunday morning I saw my grizzled dog slaking his thirst at a wayside stream, where I stayed to wash my bandages. I dried them and replaced them with difficulty. As I entered the town, the dog at my heels, I heard a church-bell ringing. I am sorry to say it only suggested the brilliant idea that here was a place where I could rest. I went into the bare brick chapel with the want of assurance bred of being ill clad and of the treatment to which I had been subjected. I did not expect to be received with that eager hospitality which in city churches so warmly welcomes a disreputable-looking man, but by good-luck it was very hot and the congregation was scanty. I entered a well-cushioned pew far back and near to the door. No one came to my pew. When the service began I arranged my cushions and enjoyed comfort unknown for days. I slept through the sermon, which seemed to me quite too brief.

I think my canine friend missed me, for just as the sermon began he scratched at the door of the pew. It was not my business, and I let him amuse himself. Someone told him to get out, which he apparently misunderstood, for he walked lazily along the aisle and went up into the pulpit. The preacher, in apparent uneasiness, asked someone to remove that dog. My tramp did not wait, but, conscious of being unwelcome, went down the middle aisle and out of the church. If there be a religion for dogs, he had not found it here. After this I fell asleep, as I have said.

After church I spent ten cents on milk and bread and priced a pipe; it was beyond my means. I found, as I expected, that I could not telegraph on the Sabbath. I recall that latter half-day as the only one in which I felt at all bored during this Bohemian time.

Milk and bread seemed to lack permanence as a diet, and at dusk I was cruelly hungry; but, resolved on economy, I tried two farm-houses before I could get as much as a crust, and it was eight o'clock when I persuaded an old woman that I needed help. I drank her sour milk

and retired to the bank of a brook, where I ate my remnant of bread, finding it pleasant under the willows.

I meant on Monday to wire my office, but foresaw that, do what I might, I should still need someone to vouch for my identity. Altogether the outlook was not reassuring. About seven P.M. I felt a drop of rain and saw signs overhead of more to come. The Inn of Out of Doors is pleasant enough when skies are fair in mid July, but the absence of roof may prove uncomfortable. I got up and looked about me. Then I took off my ragged hat and looked at it. Why I do not know, except that I saw Joe Jefferson do it in playing Rip Van Winkle. I laughed as I recalled my home, and my stables, and the club, and the busy life of my office. I was beginning, however, to acquire a certain respect for my ability to overcome the difficulties of my curious isolation, and, indeed, at times to enjoy what I knew to be only temporary misfortune.

I wanted a dry shelter; I knew better than to try the barns; the dogs of Samaria were by no means amiable. Then I remembered the church. It was nearly dark when I entered the grave-yard. It was supper-time and no one was near. I found a window at the back which opened with ease, and climbing in I closed the sash. By the fast-fading light I saw that I was in what seemed to be a modest study. Here were half a hundred books, a desk, sermon-paper, and, above all, a lounge.

I was soon at ease. The time for an evening service went by. I began to think how pleasant it would be to write a sermon and leave it for the parson's use. Then I began to be conscious of a want. If only I had a pipe, a cigarette, a cigar. I think this was a suggestion due to the stale odor of tobacco, which revealed one weakness of the gentleman who had that morning so soothed me into slumber. Perhaps—oh strong-winged hope!—perhaps he keeps here his pipe and his tobacco!

I came upon a glass kerosene-lamp set on a table and longed to light it; prudence prevailing, I resisted the temptation. Amidst the increasing gloom I began a search, conducted chiefly by touch. If I were found opening drawers and desk I should surely be convicted as a burglar, but no one was near. By and by, on a chair, shut in a book, I found a short pipe (I suspected what book it was, but shall never say). I had a kind of joy unknown since, as a boy, I ate my first stolen green apple. I came next upon a small bag of tobacco in the second drawer from the top on the left of the desk. Not to be seen of any, I sat on the floor, and, having sulphur matches in slabs, I lit my pipe. I sat still with my back to the wall, deliciously comfortable, while overhead the rain roared on the roof. I was soon to learn a lesson as to the limitations of human happiness.



I heard a noise within the church—steps. I learned long after that the good clergyman was apt to enter his study by this way. I stuffed pipe and tobacco into my pocket, and in the darkness dropped a row of matches. Awkward from weakness, I stumbled across a chair, put out a saving hand, and knocked over the kerosene-lamp; it fell with a crash. I smelt the stuff just as I saw a yellow flash and knew that I had set my foot on the matches. I understood at once what must happen. I snatched at the matches as they flamed up. It was too late. My hand was in the oil, and the flame caught my soaked bandage. The oil was all over the floor in a moment. I threw up a sash and jumped out, smothering the burning bandage with my coat-tail, and ran for my life through the darkness. It was raining heavily. When across a dozen fields I pulled up, well blown, and looked back. The wooden addition to the church was blazing and the side windows of the main building were glowing with ominous red. It was a very fine, complete, and undisturbed fire, but I did not enjoy it. I was in the eyes of Samaria a tramp, and probably a horse-thief. Now I had burned their church up—or down, as you like to put it. I was really terrified at the prospect of what might happen to me if my involuntary arson became known. Who would believe me?

As I smelt horribly of kerosene, and as my bandages were evidently scorched, I thought it as well to conceal this material evidence of guilt. I tore off the outer rolls and put them in the brook and piled stones on them. I needed them, but the need not to wear them was the more urgent need.

The night was long and wet. At last, completely soaked, I lay down and fell asleep. I shall not dwell on my misery. I had made a great escape and was thankful; moreover, I had,—good Heavens!—I had stolen a pipe and tobacco, oh, enough for a week. I discovered this at dawn. Properly speaking, penitence should have been accompanied with unwillingness to profit by my crime.

I lighted a pipe to assist me in the settlement of this problem in morals. I only clouded counsel with the pleasant results of wickedness. It takes at least four hours of the sun to dry clothes on a man. I never before knew that.

About ten on Monday I drove a hard bargain, and had for breakfast, at a cost of seven cents, a bowl of milk and bread as usual. Thus reënforced, I went past the smoking wreck of the church, reflecting on my amazing connection with the ruin. Ingenious comments as to the cause of the fire were being made by a loitering crowd.

I found my telegraph-man and asked him to write, as I could not use a pen. He grinned, and "What was it this time he was to wire?"

I said: "To Woodburn & Caruthers, 3 Wall Street, New York. Wire credit, New Samaria Bank, ten thousand dollars."

He said, "That would be, at fifteen cents a word, one dollar and twenty cents." He seemed to think it a grim joke.

I had left a capital of fourteen cents.

After this I went to the bank, attracting some attention by my raggedness. The bank appeared to have been once a small brick chapel. It was now converted to the use of Mammon. It had a look outside of melancholy indefiniteness, but within was prosperous with varnish and paint. I saw no one but an old, very bald man perched on a stool behind bars.

I said, "I want to see the president." Upon this the bald man became abruptly excited.

"Don't have no tramps here. You get out, and pretty quick too." His unlooked-for alertness was emphasized by a revolver, which he laid on the counter.

I said, "I will keep away from the counter, but it will do no harm to hear what I say."

"Well, what is it?"

"You will get a wire from the Eleventh National Bank, New York, crediting me, George Woodburn, with ten thousand dollars. I will come back about half-past two."

As I reflected on my appearance I said to myself, "What will the man say?" My statement was calculated to tax the credulity of man or banker. I was pale, in rags, dirty, with plasters on my face, and the remnant of a dirty bandage on my right hand.

"Yes. You'd best come then. If I was you I'd have made it thirty thousand dollars. Set-up job."

"I thought of wiring for more," said I.

This seemed to excite the bald man, and he let loose on me such ingenuity of epithets as a mule-driver would have envied. I left him unanswered. My vocabulary is limited. I bought one cigar and inspected the town.

I had learned much in the last four days and had added volumes of varied knowledge to the library of memory. I never in my life believed a beggar's tale, and now that no one credited mine I was amused, and, I may add, instructively astonished. My funds were down to twelve cents. I was now well used to my extraordinary outfit, and took little note of the attention I received, except to wonder why the dogs so mistook a gentleman as to bark at his toilet. But the dogs of New Samaria seemed to share the prejudices of their masters. I spent three cents on milk, and was sure that under this simple diet I was fast gaining strength and freedom from vertigo. I was thus reduced to a capital of nine cents.

It was warm when, close to three o'clock, I reentered the bank. As before, the bald man was alone.

I said, "Have you heard from my firm and the bank?"

"Well, about that I can't say. There is a telegram to credit a man named Woodburn with ten thousand dollars."

"Well?" I saw his doubt.

"You sent a wire? They say at the office a tramp sent a wire for ten thousand dollars. I took it as a joke, or that you was off your head, the way you was after killing that mare. Now, you want the money?"

"Yes. Not all at once."

"But it's damned ridiculous. I don't know if you're you or if you're someone else."

"Well," I said, "suppose I clear your head a little. Look at the telegram; it has a number at the beginning and one at the end."

"That's so. It's pretty suspicious."

"Very good. Look at the telegram. The first number is made up of the day of the week, the second of the day of the month, the 17th. That makes 19. Isn't that so?"

"Yes, that's so, but how you knew it darned if I know. All arranged, I guess. Set up in New York."

"No matter. The last number is four times the first; that is 76. We do this to prevent telegraphic misuse of our name. Of course, we change it from time to time."

The bald man was a queer thing to see. His scalp moved back and forward in a sort of tic, and the two quill pens in his ears moved with the scalp like undeveloped wings.

"You've got to be identified, and right well too. Any fool would know that. Knowin' about the numbers don't identify. You can't plunder this bank that way."

"But would they have wired you if I were not known to be here?"

"You may be you, or some other you, and I don't pay a dime on such evidence."

"You are, of course, wise to guard your bank, but why not wire your correspondents in New York and ask them to inquire? Isn't it worth while? I——"

"No, it isn't. You go and get a man to say you're you, then we can talk. I've got to look out. I'm only here to keep house like till that red-headed fool, Tom Sedgeley, gets back. There ain't no use of discussin' it."

I said, "Very well," and went away. The situation was, as I had anticipated, serious. I could not see any speedy way out of it. The completeness of my isolation amused and annoyed me. I was worth millions last month; to-day I was possessed of seven cents. What I had hoped was that the wire would excite enough of interest to cause reasonable inquiry. The bald cashier was, on the whole, right. In his place the same objections would have occurred to me or to any busi-

ness man, but I should have found it worth while to have corresponded by wire with the New York bank and so settled the matter. This he would not do. As for myself, I had asked for too much. I should have wired for a hundred dollars. A beggar in rags asking for ten thousand dollars was certain to excite distrust. I had made a foolish mistake.

Tramp-like, the ease and freedom of the country drew me. It is relatively uncritical and unsuspecting. I turned to it as if by instinct, and wandered out along the only road which led away from the river and into the rich prairie-lands. My resource was to see what I could get out of the little woman who had helped me. On the way I saw my ten-cent benefactor, Petersen, raking hay in a rather lazy fashion. I hailed him and we sat down to talk.

"Gettin' on, Cap?" he said.

"No, but do you listen to me."

He said he would.

"I've no need to lie to a fellow-tramp."

"Oh, I'm not the genuine article, and you're not a tramp at all."

"No, I am not," and I related in full my adventures.

"Gosh! and you're the man I asked to help me. You were just gettin' into a wagon. I didn't suspicion you were the man. Clothes makes a heap of difference. Suppose it's all true. What are you goin' to do? You can't work."

"No, I can't even write a letter. The nurse wrote for me, but——"

"Well, I don't see what you're to do. Let's go to the circus. It only costs ten cents for a back seat, and it's too hot to work. I'll pay," he said, when I confessed that I had only seven cents.

The recklessness of the notion captured my fancy. I was acquiring the carelessness of the true tramp. We went along talking. Evidently he more or less accepted my story, but how completely he believed I could not tell, nor did it much concern me. Something would turn up. I thoroughly enjoyed the show, and especially a clown, who was anything but sober, a circumstance which gave breadth and flavor to his jokes, as the applause showed. When it was over we went to see the animals behind the tent. This required five cents apiece, which my comrade paid. A little later we met the clown in the lessening crowd. Petersen asked him what time it was. He pulled out my watch and said, "Six o'clock."

"By George," I cried, "that's my watch, and foolishly caught his arm. He drew back with his left to hit me, when Petersen seized his wrist. The brief struggle called a crowd around us, the clown crying out that these tramps wanted to steal his watch. One of his acrobatic friends kindly suggested tar and feathers, when a burly man of six feet four shouldered the crowd aside and, explaining that he was the Sheriff,

asked what was the row. The clown stated his case. The big man considered his powdered face and then turned to me with,—

“Well, what’s your side?”

I said, “I was hurt in an accident and my watch stolen, and——”

“Oh, yes, I know. You tried to steal Smile’s mare, and got too drunk to do the trick.”

“Mr. Sheriff,” I returned, “this is a queer town. Why the mischief it is called Samaria I really do not see. The man that named it must have lived to be disappointed. I have had every kind of misfortune, and no one either helps me or believes me.”

The crowd became noisily injurious. The Sheriff cried, “Shut up, you fellows,” and looked down on me with a slowly maturing smile. “You’ve got the floor. I propose to listen.”

I thought that I had at last found a real Samaritan, and asked the clown, “Now, what kind of a watch is it?”

The crowd was pleased. The Sheriff enlarged his smile.

“Yes, Mr. Clown, what kind?”

“Why, gold, of course.”

“Give it to me,” said the big man. He quietly took it and waited while the clown reluctantly released the gold chain from its button-hole attachment.

“Your turn,” said the Sheriff to me.

“Good,” I said, and put a finger on a button as the watch lay on the Sheriff’s broad hand. The watch struck six-thirty. The crowd was still better amused, and applauded. “Now,” I said, “inside is the number.”

“We’re getting right warm,” said the Sheriff. “Now, Mr. Flour-face, what’s the number?”

“Why, there isn’t a man in this crowd can tell the number of his watch.”

Several gentlemen in boots and wide-awakes said, “That’s so.”

My friendly Sheriff turned and said to me, “Your play.”

I was dumb with horror. I could not recall the number. An hour before, or after, it was in my mind. Now I had mentally mislaid it. The effort, the annoyance, and the excitement made me feel slightly giddy. I managed to say, “Can’t remember,” and swayed against Petersen.

“Drunk, by George!” said the Sheriff. “I think I’ll adjourn this court. Mr. Clown’s case is bad. He doesn’t own that watch. The other man knows all about what that watch will do. But that proves nothing. Anyway, he couldn’t honestly own a watch like that. Just look at him. I shall keep that watch until the rightful owner appears.” He put it in his pocket.

The crowd, by this time grown large, guessed the Sheriff was about

right, and there were various comments on my looks, and proposals as to what it was advisable that a town of public-spirited Samaritans should do with a drunken horse-thief.

The Sheriff cried out: "None of that! Shut up and squander, you fellows." Then he took me by the arm and so through the crowd.

"Now," he said, as again I reeled, dizzy and faint, "you'd best get out of this and find work. We don't want drunken tramps around this town."

Petersen had slipped away. It was near to sunset, I was alone, without friends, without money; defined variously as horse-thief, drunkard, policy agent, tramp—and I had burned a church. I walked on slowly, a few yards behind the great bulk of the Sheriff, asking myself what next I should do. Should I speak to him again? At this moment he pulled a handkerchief out of his pantaloons pocket and with it came something which fell unnoticed by him on the sidewalk. A few steps brought me to it. I picked up a five-dollar note. Now, I also had the habit of carrying notes in this careless way, and more than once had lost them just as he had done. It was a case for doubt. Absolute honesty presented a claim to be heard. Hunger in several varieties said, "Get a dinner, a cigar, a good mug of beer, a clean bed, and wire everybody, and then, later, return the loan." Honesty and her twin sister, Accuracy, said, "Kindly define a loan."

I resolved to obey the habits of a life and return the note. I was a moment late; a man caught me by the arm and called the Sheriff. He turned and came back. The man said, "Didn't you drop some-thing, Sheriff? I was crossing the street and saw it. This chap's got it."

The Sheriff remembered, felt in his pocket, and missed the note. I was, meanwhile, offering it and explaining. The big man said, "Well, you're a trifle behind time."

I protested in vain. Neither man believed me, and I was thankful to be let off with additional advice in very distinct and picturesque variations upon the normal tongue of my country.

I turned about and went again out into the farm-lands in search of my Hay-Field Inn. I was hungry, and so weak that I was glad to rest once more at dusk on the still ungathered and damp hay. Too weary to go a half-mile to beg milk of the wife of my partner in calamity, I lay in the deepening gloom and considered my moral frailty. I felt that with continuity of hunger I should succumb before repeated temptation, and while weighing this matter I fell asleep.

I awakened at dawn and, despite keen hunger, felt better. A little later I set out to find Petersen at the farm-house a field away. I lingered about, and it was after six when I met him.

I said, "For Heaven's sake get me something to eat. I am half-starved."

He said, "You wait."

He came back with two cold pork chops and some stale bread. I fell upon these viands with eagerness.

Thus refreshed, I said: "How did you get this? Who gave them to you?"

"Gave? Oh, that woman don't give; I took them."

"Oh." I made no moral reflections upon this method of feeding the poor.

Petersen looked on with satisfaction. At last he said: "You can't go on this way. How's your hand?"

"Bad."

"Let me fix that bandage." As he replaced it he added, "And your head; how's that?"

"Better,—much better."

"Sit down. Let's smoke."

We sat and talked. When I gave him tobacco he said I must have been extravagant. I admitted that.

My object now was to talk my comrade into a mood either of generosity or recklessness. I retold my whole story, and as I went on he listened with now and then a not unkindly comment. At last he stood up, and, looking down on me as I sat, said: "You're a-leadin' up to somethin'. What is it?"

I thought it shrewd, and said, "I want you to go into a speculation."

"Well?"

"Lend me ten dollars." Petersen considered me curiously for quite a minute in absolute silence.

"Well, now, that's queer; you're a bit changed since that day you wouldn't help me. I didn't mind it so much. I saw that drunken driver had got you riled. I got work here at the farm. The boss knows my people. It's a fine farm. I've quit knockin' about. As to helpin' any darn nonsense like you're a-sayin', I can't if I wanted to. I've got two dollars and I'm owed four; that's six, and that's all."

"Would your boss advance wages?"

"He might."

I hardly know to-day how I won that man. Certainly I talked my best. At last he said: "It's right confusin' and it's a big gamble. You're no tramp. You say you're rich. I've been poor enough to believe anything. The poorer you are the more you believe. The richer you are the more you don't believe. You wait here."

He was gone an hour. On his return he threw a ten-dollar note in my lap. I said: "Thank you, my good fellow. You have builded better than you knew."

"Don't know as I understand you. If you mean it's a big gamble,

that's so. I kind of believe you, and I sort of don't. Anyhow, it's done, and I ain't goin' back on it."

How he arranged matters with his employer I forgot to ask. I was in haste to see what I could do with my borrowed capital. I had gone a few yards when he called out,—

"Halloa, there!" I turned. "Look here, Mister, I'm a-trustin' you. Don't you forget, if you're swindling, that it's my Minny you're robbing, and Becky too, and *Becky*."

I laughed. "You never did as good a day's work as this."

"May be," said he, and then shouldered his hoe and went on to his work. I wondered at the man's faith; or was it a wild form of charity? or, as he said, a gamble?

In the town I found a clothes dealer, and after much bargaining came out in an ill-fitting tweed suit with my old rags in a bundle. I meant to keep them. My shoes were good; my headgear hopeless. I had now one dollar and nine cents. I got breakfast for a quarter of a dollar, and had eighty-four cents left. With this I walked bravely into a barber's shop. I was studying in a mirror my face with its unshorn stubble and red scars, when behind me I heard the Sheriff say, "Halloa, you here yet?"

I had acquired courage with clean clothes. "Mr. Sheriff," I said, "if you will wait until I am shaved I will tell you the number of my watch and some other things."

The Sheriff could wait; he took a paper and sat down. When I was shaved clean, my hair cut, and my face washed, I said, "May I have a word with you?"

The Sheriff looked me over. "Why did you want me to wait until you were shaved?"

"Because you will believe me the better the less I look like a tramp."

"That's so; does make a difference. Suppose you come along with me."

I went with him. He said no more until we came to a comfortable wooden house. "Come in." I followed him. "Now," he added, "you set down." He left me, saying, "Be back in a minute."

I reflected as I took a seat that chairs are luxuries. I can still see the flowery ingrain carpet, the centre-table with four books placed symmetrically, the glass-covered artificial fruit, the sparrow-grass greenery in the chimney-place, the half-dozen rocking-chairs. When I looked up and on the wall recognized the death-bed of Daniel Webster I knew whence the big Sheriff came. He returned with a wholesome dame of large person, her face aglow with kindly curiosity under a mass of rather rebellious white hair.

"Now, I'm right glad to see you. I told Joe those circus men



robbed you. I always said so. When they were here last summer they stole Jeremiah. Men that would steal a tortoise-shell cat blind of one eye would do most anything."

The true Samaria was indoors. A mongrel dog, two women, and an alien tramp had been kind to me.

The Sheriff broke into her rush of talk. "Set down, wife. We've got to hear what Mr.— What's your name?"

"Woodburn," said I.

"We've got to hear Mr. Woodburn."

"The watch is No. 2222," said I.

"That's so," said the Sheriff. "But how came you to disremember it?"

"Why, Joe," said the wife, "that's real silly. Why, I forgot just now to say Jeremiah had six toes on his left hind foot and a mole on his lip. Why, you just scared the man so he couldn't remember. Sheriff used to scare me, Mr. Woodburn, just a little."

"Boot's on the other leg nowadays," remarked the Sheriff. "Fact is, I just brought you away to hear about that watch. You see it does look queer all round, but sure as I live those circus fellows are up a tree."

"Fellows that would steal a tortoise-shell cat would——"

"Hush, dear," said the Sheriff, "this gentleman's got the floor."

Thus encouraged, I told very quietly the story of my journey, of my arrival in New Samaria, and of all I was able to remember of my later haps and mishaps. At the close I said: "If you will wire to St. Louis in my name to Mr. Garvin, president of the Third National Bank, to reply at once, and that I have been slightly hurt and need him here, you will get an answer at once and the man next day. Tell him not to alarm my people."

"I guess that musical watch is yours," said the Sheriff. "You talk to the missus. I'll go and wire your man."

We had an answer within five hours. Until my friend came I enjoyed the hospitality of the Sheriff, but did not leave the house. I was shy of New Samaria. When on Wednesday morning came Mr. Garvin, it was really difficult to persuade him that I had been a tramp, a beggar, and suspected of being a gambler and horse-thief.

"Why, Woodburn," he said, "give a dog a bad name and he will starve."

"No," I said, "give a man a dirty suit of clothes and his character is gone."

When I related my temptations and how I had committed arson, he was delightedly amused.

"My dear Woodburn," he said, "with some small exceptions, you have pretty well illustrated the decalogue."

I said that I had.

My financial affairs were soon set upon a firm basis, and the Sheriff undertook to arrange for me some other matters of which I shall say a word later.

Mr. Garvin was well known as a correspondent of the New Samaria Bank. He dropped in with the Sheriff and mentioned that a friend of his, whom the Sheriff would identify, might present a large draft for deposit,—some ten or fifteen thousand. The gentleman owned the mines and needed money to arrange his affairs.

Of course, all was now clear enough. On Thursday I left the Sheriff and Mrs. Sheriff. They promised to keep secret the end of my adventures. I was too uncomfortable to tempt the talent of local tailors, and went away to St. Louis to refresh the inner and clothe the outer man. I was not done with New Samaria. Indeed, who, in my condition, could have stood out against such inviting opportunities for requital?

About August 20 a neatly dressed gentleman arrived at the hotel in New Samaria with his baggage in good order. He—that is, I—was quite sure that no one would see in him the tramp who had cost the town so dear. The time which lay between my two arrivals had taught me many things which, but for my accident, I might never have known. I do not regret it. Clothes elevate or morally lower. I was myself once more, and better than my former self.

The landlord was very civil when I said that I wanted to be driven to the mines. He recalled ruefully that drunken horse-thief who had fooled him and ruined his best horse. However, he would himself drive me. On the way I heard all about myself. It was not flattering.

"Why, sir, I had hardly set eyes on that man before I reckoned that he wasn't all right, but he had a sort of high way of talking as if he was somebody. It kind of took me in. I never thought he was tight. That horse was the quietest beast. Well, he cost me about four hundred dollars—darn him!"

I said it was hard.

The mine business was simple. There had been loose management and some fraud.

The next day I went to the bank. There was the bald man, his scalp still in motion, the two quill pens over his ears moving. The Sheriff was with me, but at my request he loitered outside.

I said, "Mr. Baldwin, here is a draft for fifteen thousand dollars, which I desire to deposit and against which I shall draw."

The bald man said: "Grayshuss! it's Mr. Garvin's bank! I don't know. Who identifies you?"

I called the Sheriff, who reassured the cashier. I asked about the

clerk whose leg I had incidentally broken. The bald man said he was—I think he said—a socker at figures, and confessed to his own total inadequacy as to making things balance in the last week. However, he gave me a check-book, and I returned to the Sheriff's and put on the torn livery of my tramp-life to the joy of my host, who so much desired to see the end of my comedy that I had to slip out the back way to escape his company.

I was surprised to find what a sense of freedom I reacquired with my ragged costume. I went along gayly, reflecting on what moral changes total absence of garments would bring to a man in a climate warm enough to make their absence agreeable. My tramp-life had not left me without other matters for personal reflection. As I said before, I had never had a reasonable want unsupplied. Indeed, I had been very far from a self-made man. My week of experimental autufacture had been a rather humbling proof of my incapacity; but, as every fellow is charitable concerning himself, I found excuses for my failure in my physical state, and, alas! in my rags and beard.

At this moment, being well out of town, I saw my former comrade, Petersen, leaning idly against a snake fence, his rake beside him, his pipe in his mouth. He was wiping the sweat from his forehead with his shirt-sleeve.

"Halloa!" said I. "Hot?"

"Halloa! Where in thunder have you been? Guess the Sheriff took you up for lying about that watch. I suppose my money's drawin' interest?"

"It is." He grinned.

"Never expected to see you again."

"Well, here I am, and my watch too." I pulled it out as I spoke.

"Gosh! Got it? You done it well that time."

"No, it is mine. I say, old man, why don't you settle down and work for yourself?"

"Why don't you?"

"I am thinking of it. Suppose we buy that farm and work it, you and I?"

"You and me? When I see that farm I'll answer. But darned if you ain't a queer chap! What are you up to, anyway? Did my ten dollars buy that farm?"

"Would you work?"

"Would I? You try me."

"Well, to-morrow at twelve o'clock you are to go to the bank. You will find the Sheriff. Ask if he has that farm around anywhere. He'll be in the bank at noon. Now, don't stay away. I told you a tale once; you half-believed it. At least you did not call me a liar. Do as I say."

"I'll do it; but it's like a real theatre play. A farm! and my

Minnie! It makes a fellow sweat. I don't know what you're up to, but if you're a mind to fool me——"

"Well, you will go?"

"Oh, I'll go sure enough. But mind, if——"

I went down the road enjoying my comedy. The front door of the cottage was still open, but seeing Mr. Sedgeley in a hammock under the trees I went boldly forward. The little woman, very pretty and looking girlishly young in a white gown, was reading aloud—the "Pathfinder," I think. I said, "Good-afternoon, Ma'am." The man got up on his elbow and said things about tramps. I listened, comfortably conscious of his disability. Seeing that I made no reply, he came to an end. Upon this I said, "You ought not to talk in that way to anyone; and, really, the wealth of opprobrious language on tap in New Samaria is rather surprising." As my man of the red head and broken leg began anew, his wife said, "Do be quiet, Tom," and to me, "What do you want?"

"Ten minutes' talk."

"Well, what is it?"

"You made some time ago an investment of one dollar and twenty-five cents."

"I hope it will prove profitable."

"Don't forget too the pitcher of milk and a half-loaf. I should like a bill, an account, if you please."

"What nonsense! You have made Tom very cross, and I know it is bad for his leg. I have no more money for you and no milk, and I do not fancy such jokes."

"I have made out an account myself. If you will call at the bank at twelve-fifteen to-morrow, and ask for a letter for you——"

"What on earth does all this mean?" roared the husband. "Is this fellow cracked? Get out of this, or—oh, darn that splint!"

"Will you go to the bank?" I said.

"No!" roared Tom, "she won't."

"Yes," said Madam, "at twelve-fifteen I shall be there. Why, Tom, what can be the harm?"

"Good-by," said I, assured that nothing would keep that woman from doing what I had asked her to do.

At twelve next day the Sheriff and I sat waiting in the small room at the back of the bank office. I was now again in my decent clothes and clean shaven. I heard the bald man tell Thad. Petersen to find the Sheriff right in there. I sat still at a table writing. The Sheriff, hugely pleased with the play, said, "Your name's Petersen?"

"Yes, that's my name."

"A gentleman, a friend of this man here," indicating my back, "has given you a farm."

Petersen looked at him with big blue eyes of steadfast doubt, and gently shook his head in negation. He said no words.

"There's the deed."

Petersen, anxious and flushed, took the deed of gift. He glanced at the Sheriff and then down at the paper, hesitating as he slowly opened it and spread it on the table. I kept a side watch, as yet unrecognized.

"What's all this?" said Petersen. "'For the sum of ten dollars and other valuable considerations,' etc., 'the party of the first part grants and conveys,' etc., etc." He looked up. "But it's my boss's farm, one hundred and sixty acres. It can't be; it's impossible."

"Yes, it's all right, Thad.," said the Sheriff.

"And he'll move out?"

"He will."

"And I'll move in?"

"You can."

Petersen said, "'Scuse me, Mr. Sheriff, it's weakenin'." He sat down and fell into intent study of my deed of gift. We were silent. At last he looked up and said, "Look here; it ain't no joke?"

"No," said I, turning. "Don't you know me, Petersen? You helped a starving man, whom no one else believed. You were a real Samaritan."

"I did, by George! and you're the man, and it was true."

Petersen caught my hand and said, "Lord! to think of it! Minny and me and sister Becky!"—his voice broke—"and Minny!"

I said: "That will do. It's all right."

If it gave him the pleasure it gave me, he was well repaid. He rose, saying: "You won't go till I see you again. I've got to wire Rebecca,"—he went out—"can't wait."

The Sheriff said: "That's worth the price of admission, Mr. Woodburn. Oh, here is Mrs. Sedgeley. How do ye do. How's Tom? This gentleman wants to see you."

The little woman said, "Good-morning, sir," and looked at me, puzzled.

I said: "Mrs. Sedgeley, a little while ago, a week or so, you made an investment. Here is a statement of the transaction. A tramp asked for food and money. You gave both. It seems to be unusual in Samaria. Here is the account. I am in your debt as follows:

'GEORGE WOODBURN

' To MRS. SEDGELEY, DR.

' To one mug of milk,  
' To one slice of bread,  
' To one pitcher of milk,  
' To one loaf of bread,  
' To one dollar and twenty-five cents,'

which are all put out at a good interest. There has been a considerable rise in values."

"What *does* this mean, Mr. Sheriff?" said the bewildered woman.

"You'll soon see," said the Sheriff, and I went on:

"There is the product of your investment. Mind, this is yours, not Tom's."

She looked at my check. "Why, it's five thousand dollars, sir. Is it for me?—mine?"

"Yes," I said. "And you may ask Tom if he will go out and run that coal-mine for me."

She looked at me and said, "Oh my!" and sat down and cried, sobbing out, "and we were in debt too, and—and—— It can't be true. We never had any luck since my baby died. It can't be true."

"You can have the money now," said the Sheriff, "and it is as true as your own kind heart."

I said, "Now go, and tell Tom not to swear at me when I call this afternoon."

Next I went alone to the dirty little building known as the Town Hospital of New Samaria, a part of the poorhouse. I found the doctor in a disorderly little office talking to my friendly nurse.

I said, "I have called to say a word or two."

"Would I sit down?"

"No. Doctor, I am the gentleman who was cared for here after an accident on July 4. I was robbed by the circus people and left helpless on your hands without a penny."

The woman smiled and the doctor said, "Is that so?"

"Yes; I am a New York banker, as I then said. You can find out about me from the Sheriff if you are still in doubt."

The doctor hesitated a moment and then returned: "I suppose you are going to say I might have believed you. I didn't, and I would just like to ask you if I had begged of you anywhere, and told you such a yarn, and looked like such a tramp,—now, sir, in justice to myself, I'd just like to know, would you have believed a word I spoke?"

"Upon my word," said I, remembering many vain appeals to me, "I do not think I should. However, the nurse did."

"No, not quite," said she.

"Yes, a little," said I.

"But she's a woman," said the doctor.

"Thank God for that, and for her. I was taken good care of, and we won't quarrel over the rest. My case was well managed too. Send me your account to the hotel. I will pay it. And don't make it small. I am really grateful for what you did. As to what you said, it did no harm. By the way, Miss Jane, you lent me fifty cents."

"Oh, no; I gave it to you."

"I am fortunately able to return it with interest, and let me add that if ever you need a friend I shall be at your service."

She took the envelope, looked embarrassed and curious, and slowly tore it open. "Oh, I can't. Will, I can't, can I? Why, it's a thousand dollars!"

"No," said the doctor decisively, "you did not earn it."

"What the deuce have you to do with it?" said I.

"Well, we are to be married next week."

"Of course," said I, "I ought to have made it clearer. It is a wedding-present."

"That makes all the difference in the world," said the lady. "I thank you, oh, ever so much, and it will make things so easy, Will."

I escaped, a little overcome by the comfort and joy I had given. I left her seated, and unequal to further expression of her thanks beyond "Oh, oh, sir!" The women of Samaria seem to be much given to tears.

I settled with the landlord for the horse and wagon, and promised to forget his hasty temper. The town has now a neat little cottage hospital and the Sheriff a gold repeater. My wife says it has all been fatal to my character, because now I believe every tramp and feed every beggar who wanders to the door of our country home.

I did hesitate a little about the church. Finally, however, I sent a confession and a large check to the parson, with a meerschaum pipe and a request to be allowed to keep the briarwood I had stolen. When this became known several Western editors desired me to come and burn down their old churches, and finally threw doubt on the whole incident; others said I had set fire to the church and paid for it afterwards in order to advertise my firm.

I brought home with me that Samaritan dog which crossed the street to contribute the charity of acquaintance. He is free to do as he likes, but he will go no whither with anyone but me. He is known as Tramp, and is a dog of picaresque habits. At times he is absent for a week, and may come home lean and scared, or plump and lazy.

For a year Tramp was the instant friend of every ragged scamp who appealed at my door for aid, but by degrees association with the educated class entirely altered his views, and of late it is impossible for a beggar to come near our gates, because of Tramp's acquired dislike to the ill-clothed or to the human members of a class to which he once belonged.



## IMMORTALITY

BY EDWARD WILBUR MASON

NATURE supplies the corpse, and man the tomb,  
But God the light of hope that quells the gloom.

# ANGELO OF THE PERFECTION

A PASTEL

*By Marie Van Vorst*

*Author of "Bagsby's Daughter," "Philip Longstreth," etc.*



**A**T a purple hill's foot, vineyard above, emerald crown, river below, lapis-lazuli threshold, is the Chiesa del Perfezione (The Church of the Perfection), small, as are most precious things, white as is a dove's breast when the sun strikes it.

Padre Angelo's cottage clung close to the church, part of it, child of it, and in the eyes of the faithful nearly as blessed. The church, of course, held the Bambino and many saints, but the cottage held Padre Angelo! Dear Heaven, humanity may worship the unseen, but it idolizes that which can be touched and caressed!

The house was white, as much as could be seen for the tempest of red roses and the blotting of the green vine-leaves against the walls.

Angelo ministered to his flock, his beautiful hands outspread in perpetual benediction. With his voice of gold he soothed the child-like people who attended mass and vesper with the exquisite fidelity of all things magnetized.

At confessional he heard their sins, flashed on the kneeling sinner dark eyes like a scourge, and when in proper penitence they wept, he shrove them quickly. So absolute was his "Absolvo te," that the saying ran, "To be shriven by Padre Angelo is to go snow white to God."

It was observed that more than one woman purposely, wantonly committed trivial sins just for the pleasure of trotting to the confessional to be flashed upon by Angelo's eyes of flame, shriven by his golden voice.

On feast-days, when the townsfolk were abroad at Vincio and farther; when the town of Vargia, church, and piazza were deserted by all save the priest, brigands often skulked from the hills to Vargia like animals abroad at night alone. These black-hearted men knew Angelo's charity as well as his apostolic power.

Here to him in his peaceful house was revealed more of the world's black core, more of the maelstrom of temptation, of the vortex of passion, than appears to many a man who in broad St. Mark's mingles with the world itself.



Here, where holiness seemed drawn like the sea's heart by the sun of consecration, crime and evil and human weakness were unveiled.

The burdens came only to be grasped by Padre Angelo's swift hands, the stains washed, and the penitent sent forth immaculate as is the babe unborn.

Standing in his window at sundown, Angelo on one feast-day watched the sun's red torch find the hills' crevices: they grew crimson as bloody hearts, paled to pink, then died slowly to shadow.

Down the path of creeping light, coming towards il Perfezione, he saw a tall figure that passed swiftly through the vineyards, sprang over rough places with the agility of youth and the impetus of hot intent. The stranger's hat was well down over his brows; his cloak quite hid him. This Angelo saw as the man ran into the chapel garden, passed the church, and came rapidly towards the Priest's house. Angelo was before him at the door.

"Salve, amico."

"Padre Angelo?"

"Yes—come in."

Although the Priest's little study was already full of the twilight, its bareness held light longer than does an encumbered room. On the shining table were his papers, his books religious, a great green bowl of roses, and a lute.

This last object the stranger observed. He started, looked questioningly at Angelo—then shook his head with an undertone exclamation against some folly of his own.

Angelo in the window, his hands folded in the sleeves of his cassock, bent kindly on his guest his dark eyes, his brows of snow, and the extraordinary beauty of his clear, pale face. Children in dreams saw Padre Angelo's head with the nimbus; young girls at first communion claimed to have seen it with waking eyes.

Angelo was smiling at his guest.

"You observe my lute—you are a musician? Play for me." The man threw his hat on the table and his cloak on a chair.

"Mother of God" (he swore), "lutes are no pastimes for men!" He had the brawn of a wrestler and the bearing of those men Angelo knew for the maddest, boldest brigands in the hills. Angelo's hands were in his cassock; the man too thrust his hands up his loose sleeves. He stared at the lute.

"A little trifle, like to *that*, I once saw——" (He again called himself "*ass*" under his breath.)

"Where did his Reverence buy the lute?"

Angelo smiled sweetly. "If it is to bandy questions you seek me, amico, should I not pose them? I think you have come to *talk*, not listen."

The fellow tore his eyes from the table as though the graceful instrument controlled them by force supernatural; he met Angelo's eyes and the Priest held him then.

"Friend," he said in his golden voice, "it is feast-day; in an hour my people will return from Vincio——"

"Si,—si, Reverence," nodded the shaggy head, "I know,—let's get at it."

He looked fearfully towards doors and windows. Angelo said, "I will draw my curtains," and did so. He lit two candles in their silver stems and put them on the table. The lute in the candle-light was plain to be seen.

"Per Dio!" the stranger exclaimed.

And the Priest, this time frowning, said: "I bought the little thing in an old town where I passed on a pilgrimage: I bought it for a song."

"Whose song, Reverence?"

"Mine, my son."

The man drew a long breath. "You sang—and then——"

"Again you catechise!" Angelo flashed him now a slight, merciless fire-point: glare through a cranny, as it were, glimpse of the blazing furnace-fire that burned behind those eyes. The brigand cowered.

"Come, my son, if you have anything to say——"

"Much—much, God knows!" Turning from the table, his hands still in his sleeves, he approached his father in God.

"They say in Vargia that Padre Angelo 'sends souls snow white to God.' The tale runs too in Vincio; it has whispered through the forests until it blew to Rodante."

At this last word Angelo withdrew one hand from his ample sleeve and considered the fine finger-ends and perfect nails. He ran the hand through the hempen cord wound round the waist of his white robe. Angelo belonged to the holiest order in "The Brotherhood of Mary."

"In Rodante!" he repeated. "Yes? In Rodante then, as well as in Vargia, you are children?"

"In Rodante," said the man, "we are men and women. Where the two are is sin; we are not children, Reverence."

"Good; you know wisdom then, my son. Go on."

"When I remembered you, Padre Angelo, in the dawn to-day I came. I have come more than fifty miles, run them, torn over hills and up them, panted through forests like an animal—to come to you——"

"Yes, amico?"

"So that you will make me 'snow white for God.'"

Angelo took from the table his missal—it was close to the lute; the instrument rocked on its curved side as the volume touched it.

Angelo had seen many sins, many crimes, laid bare.

"God is merciful, my son. He asks but one thing—repentance."

"I bring *that*" (muttered the guest). "He knows it!"

"Good, then! Speak, amico."

The man threw his head back; his beard, thus raised, stood out straight, a black brush. His swollen throat palpitated; his shirt was loose, as though the swelling veins had burst the linen's band.

"Rodante—you do not perhaps know it, Reverence? It's a jewel town of riches—and love."

Angelo moved his hand along the scourge cord towards the knot at the end and held it.

"And love," he murmured. "Go on, my son."

"Si—si!" hurried the other. "Men go mad for love in Rodante, the women are so beautiful, the air from the hills is wine—it bathes you."

"In half an hour I shall find it hard to send you unseen from Vargia," reminded the Priest.

The man met his eyes and went on. "For a year Rodante was my nest of joy, my pillow of content, my paradise. I had no need of bell or book or priest. When one is happy, one is good, Reverence! Once a month, however, I confessed, and *she* confessed her foolish sins. Dio, but the priest must have laughed in his box—Colomba—Carissima!"

The candles lately lit, clear and young, burned with steady flame. Angelo showed tall and like a shining angel in the light—white cassocked, his head a saint's.

The black Rodantan showed a beast of passion, half bowed as he was over his folded arms and his hidden hands. Now his beard pointed forward at Angelo.

"Then my trade took me away for two years from the town. I was every hour on fire for her; in each day of absence I lived only to return to Rodante and to Marina."

Here the Priest's hand (although he must have known the knot was never to be untied—sacred knot noosed years before at Rome, blessed by His Holiness)—here the Priest's hand found the end of his girdle, and as though his slender finger would pierce like an ivory blade, it played, insinuated, around the rock-hard hempen ball. That ball had scourged Angelo on the bare flesh, it had crimsoned with his penitential blood.

The man's confession went on.

"And Marina! I hurried back from Naples, and heaven had envied Rodante its bliss and damned it! Marina was a ghost, and out

of her love had died, thus." He smote the flame from one of the candles with his fist—one movement, and his hand was up his sleeve again. The black wick smoked a second—flameless.

"My son," said the golden voice, "in Rodante you are not children—men and women know that loves die."

The man ignored him.

"I went to confession. She would not. It seemed she had been on a pilgrimage at Easter and confessed at a wayside cross. She held it to be enough, for the priest was fresh from Rome, it seems, and carried special dispensations."

Here Angelo let his knot go free. His hand met its fellow; both fell before him—clasped.

"That she did not confess I could well forgive. Marina's sins? Why, they would slip into Paradise past St. Peter: so small and white, he might mistake them for angels!"

(He laughed in his dry throat.)

"But, Madonna, I could not forgive that love went! Like a dog, I waited at doors day and night for it to come back to me—until—last night——"

Angelo encouraged. "Yes—yes,—last night, my son——" In his voice the gold had thickened, frozen as though his throat were a mould that held it vised. It should never again flow liquid in caressing stream.

"Last night, just beyond midnight, I grew mad. I sought her—and found her at her window in the moonshine, her eyes fixed towards whatever shrines she sought at Easter. 'What did you confess at Easter, Marina?'

"And she said, 'If I tell you in God's truth, will you leave me?' I promised her, and she told me that she had confessed her love for another man.

"This is my excuse," said the Rodantan.

His breath like steam, his breast panting. "My knife was in my belt; I killed her——"

Here a sound on the window made him start, whine out, quiver like a hound.

"It is the roses—the rose-vines tapping the glass," said Angelo.

"I should have known the sound," muttered the man. "*Her* roses tapped the window-panes as she lay in the moonshine. She will lie there—to-night, to-morrow, who knows how long? Who will find Marina? We lived far away—no one sought us."

He seemed to muse and wander, then shivered, and starting said,—

"Shrive me, Reverence, and let me go."

Angelo opened his missal, took the holy water, and from his own breast a little crucifix he wore.

With no accusing flame from his eyes to prepare, and no exhortation, he shrove the penitent in a voice cold as marble, deep as death.

Now the man was in haste. He mumbled his responses, looked furtively at doors and windows, eager to be gone. When he had knelt, risen, and kissed the Symbol, his brow wet with the water's holy cross, he stood straight, erect.

"I feel clean again!" He laughed a little; his white teeth gleamed; his eyes were blue and childlike.

"The people are right, Reverence. Your absolution is a miracle!" He lifted his arms above his head and held them so upstretched; his brow raised, eyes raised to a great crucifix hanging on the wall beyond him. "Now I feel my soul can go white to God——"

"So shall it then!" cried the Priest's voice. Angelo slipped from the table into his right hand a small, keen blade. With a gesture like light he raised it—it fell; the steel shot through the bared, uplifted throat, came out sucking, drawing a crimson trail.

The Rodantan screamed once, fell forward; Angelo sprang aside and the body lay face downward before the crucifix.

Without looking at the quivering body, the Priest seized the lute, pressed it to his lips, his cheeks, kissed the strings where a woman's fingers had so sweetly played. He hid the instrument in his gown's folds and stole from the room, slipping from house and garden past the white church of the Perfection towards the hill-slope.

In a trice he had begun the steep ascent of little winding paths that lose themselves in vineyards, lead to forests, and thence to towns beyond the hills.

The people returning from the fair at Vincio saw the white robe in the moonlight against the purple of the evening-clad foliage. "The Reverence is gone on a pilgrimage to the mysterious shrine," they said.

"He will not return to-morrow; there will be no mass."

The simple creatures watched his robes vivid against the hill-side; finally he became a fleck of white, like a dove flown into the shadow.

Then they turned their eyes to the church shining in the moonlight like a dove's breast.

They crossed themselves with sign like to the symbol at the church's summit, and went each to his home in peace.



## COMPENSATION

BY KATHERINE LOUISE SMITH

WE strive and toil for Earth's vain, fleeting dross,  
 We mount Fame's ladder only for our loss;  
 What we call gain is but a feeble strife  
 For what we lose when we depart this life.

# THE GOVERNOR'S CHOICE

By *Joseph A. Altsheler*

*Author of "In Circling Camps," "Last Rebel," etc.*



THE Governor had the faculty of discharging all expression from his face, an unusual gift and valuable upon occasion. Now he was silent, while the men talked, gazing through the window of his office at the grand circle of hills that curved about the little capital. This had always been his favorite view, and to-day it was especially so, with the slopes glowing in all the intense reds, yellows, and browns of Indian summer's foliage, and the deep, beautiful river flowing through the cut there that looked like a great sabre slash.

But the Governor, despite his look of inattention, was paying close heed to every word, and his soul was full of indignant rebellion. He was very young,—in fact, many people thought him too young when, at thirty-two, he became the Governor of a great State with more than two million inhabitants. But he had done well; his own conscience told him so, and, moreover, he had public approval. He felt so strong that he was a candidate for reelection, and he had hoped to secure an easy nomination in the approaching convention of his party.

His first nomination was a lucky chance. The strong candidates had worn each other out in the convention, and, his name being offered by his friends at an opportune moment, he was accepted as a sort of compromise and relief from the others. Now he had hoped to be renominated on his merits, and there was every prospect of it until this troublesome affair came up.

He had known Bill Curtis well, and he knew too that the man thoroughly deserved his fate. Yet here were Curtis's friends pleading in the most plausible manner for his pardon, and under everything that they said was a threat too. He saw the threat as well as if it had been spoken in plain words, and they knew that he saw it; they intended that he should.

But the Governor, while the men talked, silently reviewed Curtis's whole story, his wealth, his influence as a politician, his powerful connections throughout the western part of the State, the killing, and the expectation of his friends through these agencies to secure his acquittal. But the tide of public indignation was too strong, and then followed his sentence to imprisonment for life, a verdict reduced from

hanging through the obstinacy of one jurymen, who was moved by the tears of his wife and children in the court-room.

Yes, Bill Curtis was a man who deserved his fate and more—he should have been hanged. He had now served four years of his term and had been a good, tractable prisoner. His friends were making the most of this, as they pleaded to the Governor for his pardon. Price, the State Senator, Curtis's brother-in-law, was the chief spokesman of the party, but Bush, who was Judge of White County, and Hart, the Representative in the Legislature from Wolf County, also took an active part. All the men were prominent politicians, some in office and some out, except the Reverend Mr. Littlebury, the pastor of the leading church in Breckfield, whom they had induced to come with them by pointing out the complete reformation in Curtis's character and the beauty of forgiveness.

"I ask you, Mr. Governor, to think of poor Curtis's wife and children," said Senator Price. "They sit there in their desolated home mourning night and day for their natural protector, wrenched from them by a cruel law, and forced to pass his life in that awful place."

They could just see over the roofs of some low houses the dark stone walls of the penitentiary.

"Why did not Curtis think of these things when he killed Adair?" asked the Governor.

"Curtis sinned, and his friends know it now—he knows it himself," said the Reverend Mr. Littlebury in a high, sing-song voice, "but he has repented—aye, he has repented in sackcloth and ashes. The William Curtis who went through that awful gate is not the William Curtis whom we seek to bring forth. No, he is a redeemed man now. Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, and we ask you to give him back to his wife and children that by a life of good deeds he may expiate the great fault he has committed."

The Governor made an impatient little movement. He had much knowledge of men, and he had gone through the penitentiary two weeks before. He saw Curtis then, and he read at once his sly, sanctimonious look. Moreover, the recklessness of his State in regard to human life always weighed upon him, and it would ill become a Governor to encourage this feeling. Curtis should have been hanged, and nothing could change the fact.

"You ought to do this for us, Governor," said Judge Bush; "and, besides, a man should not be above thinking of his own interest when it goes with the right. Such a noble act of mercy would help you greatly in the convention, Mr. Hastings."

The significance of this speech was plain,—they were not dealing in veiled hints now,—but the Governor seemed to take no notice. He was looking through the window at the splendid curve of hills, glowing

in the deep dyes of Indian summer and the blue ribbon of the peaceful river.

His had been a pleasant life in the capital. He loved the picturesque little city. He had come to it in the flush of youth, with his young wife, then a bride, the Governor and the first lady of the State. He had tried to do well, and the press and the people said he had succeeded. He had been happy there, and his wife too. He wanted to stay another four years; he was ambitious—very ambitious; he did not conceal from himself that fact, nor did he wish to do so; he believed ambition legitimate; if he made a good Governor for another four years, he might have a chance later on for a seat in the United States Senate.

Now everything was ruined by the wretched Curtis case. Why did not his friends leave the man to the punishment that he so richly deserved? But they would not, and among them they would control the entire delegation from the western part of the State to the convention. And if he did not pardon Bill Curtis, they would cast all that vote against him, thus insuring the nomination of Westcott, his opponent, and the nomination of his party was equivalent to election.

The Governor saw in a glance his future, his removal from the stage of real affairs, the dull little country town, where he must hang out his sign and practise law again for a thousand dollars a year or less, waiting through weary years for the something to turn up that would never turn up. No, he could not go back to such a life as that, nor could he drive Lucy to it, used now as she was to this much greater and brighter sphere.

"Gentlemen," he said, "this is a matter of importance, and I wish that you would give me a little longer time to think about it. Suppose you meet me here at the same hour to-morrow afternoon and I will tell you my decision."

An almost imperceptible smile of triumph appeared on the face of Senator Price, but he was too keen to indulge in any effusive words. The minister began again on his favorite theme of "Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord," but the others checked him, and with a few words of thanks they went out.

The young Governor sat for a long time in his lonely office, thinking. It was the first time that he had been consciously untrue to himself, and the feeling of it was even more unpleasant than he had expected. But there was the other side, glory, a brilliant career, the Governorship again, and then the United States Senate,—in short, a life among great men and in the midst of great affairs. How dull now seemed that little country town from which he came, with its petty gossip and narrow existence!

The twilight was falling, and the river and gleaming hills were



sinking away in the darkness, when he was roused from his abstraction by the colored doorkeeper.

"Miss Lucy done comin' for you, Mr. Hastings," he said; "she wonderin', I guess, why you stayin' so late."

He put on his light overcoat and hurried out to meet his wife. She was coming across the Capitol yard, a hood over her head and a shawl about her shoulders to protect her from the late autumn breeze, which was full of chill.

The Governor's face lighted up with deep tenderness. He was a young man, but he was ten years older than his wife. She was a mere girl when he brought her there to be the first lady of the State, and she had enjoyed it with the pure, innocent joy of a girl. And she had brought to her high station a grace and dignity which with her youth had endeared her to all the people. How could he take her back to that dull life in the hills? He had shared with her too that dream of the United States Senate, and she had found it hard to hide her enthusiasm.

Now she came to meet him, a wisp of her brown hair falling from her hood across her face.

"Why do you stay so late, Paul?" she asked. "Don't you know that it is night, and dinner is waiting?"

They had just begun to light the gas-lamps on the lawn.

"Affairs of state, mighty cares, Lucy," he replied, smiling.

"Oh, yes, I know," she said, returning his smile, "the delegation of politicians that came this morning. You've been sitting up there all day with them, smoking and telling each other bad political jokes. See, everybody else has gone home. There are no lights in the Auditor's office. I met the Commissioner of Agriculture going down the street, and the Treasurer went home an hour ago."

She had always been a tonic to him after the work and worries of the day. It was only a few steps from the Capitol across the lawn and down the street to the old-fashioned house which the State had built for its Governors three generations ago. There he was in another atmosphere, one of youth and gayety.

He put her arm in his and they walked on together. Two "trusties" in their striped convict suits at work about the Capitol grounds bowed respectfully to the Governor and his wife. In the street they met other people, and everybody had the same bow and smile of genuine warmth.

"How nice it is," said Mrs. Hastings, "and how pleasant the people are, and, oh, to think, Paul, that we shall have four years more of it! Mr. Guthrie, of the *Herald-Record*, paid his party call to-day, and he said you were sure to be renominated. He said you were much stronger in the mountains and the central part of the State than Mr. Westcott, and the votes you would draw from the west would be sure

to give you the nomination. He regarded it as all settled, he said, and I was so glad to hear him say so, because I do want so much to stay here. Don't you, Paul?"

"Oh, yes," he replied, "I'm as anxious as you are to stay, and I hope that Guthrie is right in his prophecy."

"Why, you haven't any doubt of it, have you, Paul? Mr. Guthrie is in a position to know. He goes all over the State, and he sees all the politicians."

"Of course he knows, if anybody does," replied the Governor hastily, "and I haven't any doubt, Lucy, that you and I will be walking across this lawn just as we are this evening a year from now and two years from now and three years from now, still the Governor and his wife."

They reached their home, the Governor's mansion, a low, weather-stained building, of which the State sometimes complained as inadequate to its dignity, but which every Governor who had lived in it—there had been more than twenty of them—loved. One found so much comfort in its large rooms, wide halls, and ancient ease.

They passed into the sitting-room, where a great fire of crackling hickory logs was blazing in the wide fireplace, and warmed their fingers before it, just as the twenty Governors before them and their wives had warmed their fingers at similar fires in that very fireplace.

The Governor thought again how comfortable and cheerful it was. He had never realized until this moment how thoroughly he was permeated by this life and how he loved it. And Lucy too! It was the very air to her! He looked around at the wide, low-ceilinged room, the wood, polished by age, the quiet repose and dignity of everything, and then he reflected that Paul Hastings was Governor of that State and should be so again.

At dinner Lucy was in her gayest mood. She was looking forward to a brilliant winter. Three of her girl friends were to be much in the house, and she and the wife of the Secretary of State and the wife of the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeals, acting as a committee, had arranged in perfect harmony a long series of official balls, receptions, card parties, and other entertainments. The Legislature too was to meet for its biennial session, and all things promised the gayest season the little capital had ever known.

She was so full of these plans and their promise that she did not notice for a long time her husband's absent and depressed mood.

A peculiar feature of this dining-room is the portraits of its Governors arranged in rows around the walls, making a goodly array, with several faces of marked character in the number. The State pays for them. Each Governor as he goes out is painted by a good artist and the picture is put in its proper place.

The Governor glanced occasionally at the stern faces. This State

is proud of its Governors; it has never yet failed to elect a man of distinction and character to the place, and the Governor fancied that all of these men, some of them running back into the eighteenth century, were looking at him with reproach. He knew it was only an idle fancy, but it weighed upon him, and by and by his wife noticed his depression.

"What is the matter, Paul?" she asked. "Have you got the headache?"

"A little, Lucy," he replied, with a faint smile. "It's been a hard day at the office,—I've really been working,—but it will pass away presently."

His depression did not depart, however, as he would glance up, despite himself, at the rows of grave, steadfast faces on the wall, and he always saw on every one the same look of reproach. His wife's eyes followed his own and she smiled.

"It will be nice to see your picture there, Paul, five years from now," she said.

"I would much rather see it there five years from now than one year from now," he replied.

"Why, we can't think of such a thing as having it there only a year from now," she said brightly. "Why, you'd be much too young then, Paul, for such grave, elderly company."

"That is a good reason for us," he said, laughing a little, "but I'm afraid it wouldn't count much with the delegates to the convention."

They went back presently to the sitting-room, where the fire in the wide fireplace was bigger and more cheerful than ever. The hickory logs crackled under its blaze with a sound like subdued pistol-shots. It was dark and cold outside, and a rising wind whistled around the old house, making it all the more cosy inside.

They seldom passed an evening without visitors, as there was no gayer house in the little capital with its young host and hostess, who stood so high both officially and personally.

Mrs. Hastings gazed out of the window into the cold dark, and then she turned back to the bright fire.

"I've grown to like this old house, Paul," she said.

"All the Governors' wives do," he replied.

She sat down before the fire and, leaning her chin on her hand, was silent, gazing into the coals. The Governor watched her. The wilful brown curl which would steal from under her red hood when she crossed the Capitol lawn still fell across her face. There was a spiritual note in Lucy's beauty, something childlike that appealed to all that was deepest and best in him. He not only loved her, but he felt that he must be her shield too from the rough world. But a girl

when she came here, she was now both girl and woman, and this new life had been good for her. He might endure again that dull world of the little town in the hills, but not she. He was sure that even now she was building air-castles in the coals, and her beauty seemed to him more appealing than ever as the red flame of the fire fell across her cheek.

Her abstraction ceased after a while and she turned and gazed at her husband, who now had fallen into a reverie, though his thoughts were moody.

"Paul," she said, "you are ill. I know that you are. You have been working too hard. It was only a jest of mine about your smoking and joking with those politicians."

"Didn't I know it was only a jest of yours, Lucy, dear?" he said, putting his hand on her shoulder with a caressing motion. "But I have had a pretty hard strain for the last month. There's all the regular work, and I've got to get ready for the Legislature. I have to write too my annual message, and that's no light task. And then I must look after my interests in the convention also—Carter's to be my leader there, but, of course, I should help him."

He turned his face aside, as if he would avoid her gaze, something that he had never done before. The action struck her, and she was silent for a little while. Then she said:

"Paul, there is something else on your mind. You have worked hard before, but it never worried you in this way. What is it, Paul?"

"There is nothing else, Lucy," he replied.

Then he walked uneasily to the window and gazed out into the darkness.

She watched him keenly and with growing uneasiness. She had all a woman's intuition and a most delicate sensitiveness to her husband's moods. She rose presently and joined him at the window. Then she put her arm in his and she said again:

"What is it, Paul? Won't you tell me? I know that you are troubled. Something disagreeable has happened to-day. It must have been those politicians."

She waited, obviously for an answer, but he hesitated. She said nothing, but increased the gentle pressure upon his arm.

"Yes, there is something," he confessed at length.

She still waited.

"Come back to the fire," he said after a pause.

He put her in the easiest chair before the coals and stood beside her, still hesitating. He thought how well she looked, sitting there in the Governor's mansion, the first lady of the State. She too said nothing, merely waited.

"You are right, it was those politicians from the western part of

the State," he said at last; "they wanted something from me and they wanted it very much. They were relatives and friends of Bill Curtis."

"The man who committed that murder and who was sent to the penitentiary for life?"

A shudder shook her delicate frame.

"Yes, the same, and they want me to pardon him."

"Why, Paul, you wouldn't think of such a thing!"

"They tell of his wife and children left desolate. They say he is a changed man now and would lead a good life. They had with them too a minister who pleaded for him. He spoke of rejoicing over the sinner who was forgiven. He quoted to me the text, 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.'"

Her lips set firmly.

"I feel very sorry for his wife and children, Paul," she said, "but the man committed a murder, and he was tried before a judge and jury. The jury, not you, put him in the penitentiary, and that minister had no right to come to you with such texts. If you were to pardon him, you would be only undoing what the law has justly done."

"But think of his chance to lead a better life, Lucy. They say that he is a reformed man."

"I don't believe it, Paul. Their friends say it about all of them. And we have too many killings in this State, you know that as well as I do, Paul, and you must not pardon Curtis."

He made no reply just then and she waited.

"But that is not all, Lucy," he said after a while. "Curtis was an influential man, and related to nearly everybody of prominence in his part of the State. Well, they threatened me to-day."

"Threatened you, Paul? How could they do that?"

"It's just this, Lucy. They will control the delegation in the convention from their end of the State, and if I don't pardon Curtis we won't be here for a second term."

"They will defeat your renomination?"

"Yes."

Her face blanched, and he saw her lips quivering.

"Do you mean, Paul, that those men will beat you in the convention if you refuse to pardon Curtis?"

"That's it," he replied, trying to laugh. "They have the power, and they will certainly use it. Mr. Westcott is an able and good man, and there is no reason why they shouldn't vote for him if they want to."

"But they would vote for you if you pardoned Curtis?"

"Yes," he replied, and he was surprised to find that he was trying to be glib, "and I might pardon him after all. He has served five years already. Think what a punishment that is for a man in the position that he once held. I could say that he has reformed and needs a new

chance. I could tell how the minister himself came to plead for him."

He stopped, suddenly ashamed of himself, and the red flushed his face. But the color returned to her cheeks and her lips grew firm again.

"No, Paul," she said steadily, "we must not deceive ourselves that way. If you pardoned Curtis, it would be because we want to come back here four years more."

"But I may really be justified in pardoning him. Perhaps the minister is right. He may do more good for the world and himself outside the walls of the penitentiary than inside them. Think, Lucy, of what it all means! We can't go back to that pinched little life in the hills."

She rose now and, putting her arms around his neck, lay her cheek against his.

"I know all that it means, Paul," she said. "It is hard for me, as it is for you, to give up our life here. I will not make any secret of that. I know too that it ruins your career, but I can go back to the hills and you can go with me. I would not have you, Paul, my husband, to buy even a governorship with any such sacrifice of the right. Are those men still here?"

"Yes, and I am to answer them to-morrow afternoon."

"There is only one answer you can give them, Paul."

He pressed her cheek more closely to his.

When the Governor walked up the steps of the Capitol the next morning he met Guthrie, the correspondent of the *Herald-Record*, a young man with a grave, cool face. They were good friends: Guthrie had written very pleasant things about him in the *Herald-Record*, the State's most powerful newspaper.

"I hear that a delegation of Bill Curtis's friends are here seeking his pardon," said Guthrie, after the good-mornings.

"Yes, they came up yesterday, and I shall give them an answer at five o'clock this afternoon."

"They are influential men, Governor," said Guthrie significantly.

"So I know."

"Would you mind intimating what your answer will be?"

"If you wish, you can be present in my office when I make it," replied the Governor.

The delegation, led by Senator Price, came at the appointed time. All of them looked happy, as if they thought the victory already won.

"Well, Governor," said Senator Price genially, "a night to think over a knotty problem usually puts a man in the right frame of mind, and we hope that you have good news for poor Bill Curtis and us."

## The Governor's Choice

"I have thought long over the matter," replied the Governor gravely, "and I have come to the conclusion that murder is murder and must be punished. Gentlemen, I cannot grant the pardon."

The faces of the committee fell and then grew threatening.

"Of course, you understand, Governor," said Senator Price in smooth, even tones, "that poor Bill Curtis's friends are likely to feel a little hard about this."

"Oh, I understand," replied the Governor wearily, as he turned away.

The committee stalked out, their brows lowering, and the Governor was left alone with Guthrie.

"Governor," said the correspondent warmly, "I honor you more than any other man I know."

"Thank you, Billy," replied the Governor sadly, "but I am beaten for the renomination, and you understand that as well as I do."

He spoke the truth, although his friends made a great fight for him. The *Herald-Record* came down to the Capitol with a glowing account of his firmness, and the true state of the case was soon known all over the State. It drew additional votes for him from the centre and east, but the west, where the friends of Curtis had a powerful organization, remained obdurate. The Governor's lieutenant, Carter, made a thrilling speech on the floor of the convention, appealing for fair play and justice to a man who had done right in the face of great temptation, the press was solidly his friend, but everything was unavailing, and Westcott was nominated by a majority of twenty votes, a narrow margin in a convention that contained nearly a thousand, but enough.

"I did my best, Governor," said Carter sadly, after the convention was over.

"I know you did, Tom," replied the Governor, "and I know too that my friends are left to me."

The year ended somewhat gloomily in the old house at the little capital. The Governor found his chief consolation then in Lucy. She sought to be cheerful and gay and she never complained of anything, but there were moments when depression overcame them both.

As Christmas approached the Governor feared that he would collapse through overwork and nervous strain, but pride and necessity did not permit him to relax. The Legislature would meet on the last day of the year, and he must have his annual message ready. Besides, all bills passed by the Legislature must come to him for approval.

He was able to keep up with the work until his message was read to the Legislature, and then the collapse came. The doctors told him that he must go away from the capital, and the farther he could get from railroads, newspapers, Legislatures, and the affairs of men the better. A rest for a few weeks under such conditions would restore him completely, and then he might return and attend to the bills.

The whole eastern part of this State is a mass of wild and tangled mountains, almost a primitive wilderness, and there the Governor and Lucy went, Tom Carter having placed at their disposal his comfortable hunting-lodge on the side of the highest peak.

It was a wonderful world to them, this world of the mountains in its winter robe of white, and there in the keen, frosty air, aided by his youth and good constitution, the Governor's health and spirits returned rapidly. There was not much for them to do, but the log cabin with the great, blazing fire and its two attendants was always cheerful. Tom Carter too had left plenty of books, and with them they whiled away part of the time. But they talked often of their prospects now, and their courage came back. They would return to the little town in the hills when his term expired, and no one should think that they were not content. He would work with all zeal, and perhaps he might come to the front again; it would be a long struggle, but it was worth trying, and at least they had each other.

When they were there about two weeks the snow melted, the earth was dried by a strong wind, and a day so beautiful came that they climbed to the very top of the mountain, the highest peak of the State, and looked far out over a range of seventy miles, embracing parts of four States, a view not to be surpassed east of the Mississippi.

"How near one feels to heaven here," said Lucy.

"One surely feels above earth," replied the Governor.

She glanced down and along the path by which they had ascended.

"Why, there's a man coming," she said.

"A hunter, or maybe one of our own men from the house," he replied.

"No, it is not," she said; "he is not dressed like either; it's somebody from the city, and I believe I know him. Why, it's Mr. Guthrie, of the *Herald-Record*."

"So it is," said the Governor. "What on earth can he be doing here!"

It was Guthrie sure enough, and when he saw them he hastened his steps and gave a joyful halloo.

The Governor was standing then directly upon the crest of the highest peak, his tall, straight figure outlined black against the red gold of a brilliant sun.

Guthrie came up to them, stopped a moment to recover his breath, then bowed to the Governor's wife, but spoke directly to the Governor.

"Mr. Senator," he said, "I am happy to find you at last."

"Why, what do you mean, Billy?" exclaimed the Governor.

Guthrie took a copy of the *Herald-Record* from his overcoat pocket, held it up, and they read the flaming headlines on the first page:



## 176 Out of the Floor of the Gray Old Sea

STILL LOST IN THE WILDS.  
NO ONE YET ABLE TO REACH THE UNITED STATES SENATOR-ELECT.  
OUR CORRESPONDENT HOPES TO GET THROUGH WITH THE NEWS  
WHEN THE SNOW MELTS.

"Why, what does this mean, Billy?" repeated the Governor.

"It means that you are the new United States Senator-elect from our State," replied Guthrie jubilantly. "It was a surprise, but everybody says that it has come right. You know old Mr. Litchfield was so sure of renomination that nobody opposed him. Well, the old gentleman—he's seventy-two next March—had a paralytic stroke, and the doctors told him he must retire. It was so unexpected that the Legislature was at a loss. A half dozen candidates, all weak, sprang up. Then Walker, of Fayette, proposed your name. It took like a house a-fire. Sort of poetic justice, everybody said: they knew why you had lost the nomination for the Governorship. Besides, you were the real timber for the United States Senate, and the State couldn't do better. And I'm happy to be the first to reach you with the news. I offer my sincerest congratulations to you and to your wife."

Lucy put her hand softly upon her husband's arm.

"You have found repayment, Paul," she said.

The Governor took off his hat, and, standing there on the crest of the peak, he said humbly,—

"As God is my witness, I shall strive the best I may to be worthy of this great honor."



## OUT OF THE FLOOR OF THE GRAY OLD SEA

BY BLISS CARMAN

OUT of the floor of the gray old sea  
Flowers the scarlet moon,  
Thrusting the tip of her budding lip  
Through its watery sheath in the waiting June.

Out of the gray of forgotten things  
My heart shall arise at full,  
And illumine space to find your face  
By a love-light quiet and wonderful.



## A GIRL IN THE ROCKIES

*By Caroline Lockhart*

(SUZETTE)



### I.

SITTING on the edge of the manger, I talked it over with Bill. Bill was a lean, long-legged sorrel horse, not overly bright, but we understood each other. He belonged to Joe Kipp, the prosperous half-breed who owned the ranch-house on the Blackfoot Reservation in Montana where I was staying. I wanted to go to "Swift Current," which was a new mining camp among the Rockies, and from Swift Current take a guide and go over the Swift Current Pass into the McDonald Lake country. It was a sixty-mile ride across the Reservation to Swift Current and the trails were bewildering to a

tenderfoot. I might lose my way, and there was a possibility of meeting Indians or whites who would show little consideration to a woman alone.

I explained all this to Bill, but he kept on eating as though it did not impress him, and his stolidity gave me confidence.

"Bill," I cried with sudden resolution, "we'll do it. We will! we will!"

Bill wiped his mouth on my skirt in a friendly fashion that made me feel he approved of the decision.

I ran to the house and was soon dressed in my divided riding-skirts, high-laced boots with silver spurs at the heels, a broad-brimmed hat of stitched felt, and my thirty-two-calibre revolver, which I tied around my waist with a black silk sash. Such goods and chattels as I wished to take with me I thrust into a clean flour-sack to be tied on the back of my saddle by the buck-skin thongs.

All the solemn little half-breeds of the ranch-house came out to watch me swing into the heavy "cow-saddle" which was on Bill's back when he was led to the door.

Joe Kipp pointed out to me the trail, which led across the prairie and disappeared around a butte.

"Witzel's will be the first house," he said. "It is in the Milk River Valley, twenty miles from here. Ride lively, and you'll make it by noon. Good-by, good luck, and watch the trails."

"Keep yer eye on yer turkey er you might lose her off," warned Dan, the ex-cowboy, who had saddled my horse. "Turkey" in Dan's vernacular meant knapsack, in this case my flour-sack. The little half-breeds cried shrill good-byes, and as I shook the reins on Bill's neck he stretched his long legs in a brisk gallop down the alkali road.

When I realized that I was off and my adventure had begun I gave a little gasp, such as one involuntarily gives when he plunges into a cold bath.

It was half-past nine, the morning air was cool, and sweet with the fragrance of the wild roses but just blooming in this northern climate, though the month was August. Soon my confidence returned, and Bill snorted and tossed his long red mane in high spirits.

The prairie was like a gay carpet woven in gaudy colors of red, yellow, and blue. On the left was old Rising Wolf and the purple Rockies, on my right a vast, unbroken expanse of prairie stretched away as far as the eye could reach.

When the butte around which the trail led shut the ranch-house from sight a strange feeling of isolation and loneliness came over me, such a feeling as one experiences in a dense fog.

At "Cut Bank River" Bill stood knee-deep in a clear, swift-flowing stream, drinking to the point of bursting. Suddenly he lifted

his head and pricked up his ears. A piercing "Yeep, yeep" broke the stillness, and I heard a clatter of hoofs over the rocks.

My heart began to beat when I saw a herd of horse driven by two Indians dashing towards the ford. Indian-fashion, they were lashing their horses at every jump. When they saw me sitting motionless on Bill in the middle of the stream they pulled the cruel bits hard and brought their horses back on their haunches. They stared at me and Bill, then they began to discuss us in the Piegan tongue. My courage rapidly oozed away. I was afraid to ride towards them, and yet I did not want to show the white feather by starting Bill on a run back to the ranch-house.

I felt hot and cold streaks flash over me when they spurred their horses into the stream. With my hand on the handle of the revolver in its holster I waited.

The one in the lead was a big Indian with a tight braid of glossy black hair on either side of his head. He was middle-aged and wore ear-rings, and a leather case at his belt held a savage hunting-knife. His clothing was a flannel shirt, overalls, and moccasins.

He grunted a salute as he reined in his horse beside me.

"Joe Kipp horse?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied in a voice that I tried hard to keep steady.

"Where go?"

"Swift Current."

"Two sleeps," said the Indian as he shut his eyes and twice laid his head on his shoulder. Understanding that he meant it was two-days' ride further, I nodded assent.

"Good-by," said the Indian as he spurred his horse out of the water, followed by his companion.

"Good-by," I answered, and I lost no time in getting Bill on the other side.

We rode for miles after this, and saw no living creature save the ground-squirrels that whisked into their holes as we passed.

The sun rose high and the heat became great for Montana. Bill began to lag. I was thirsty and hungry. When I looked at my watch it was one o'clock and no house in sight. I became so thirsty that once or twice I drank the alkali water which in a couple of coulees had seeped into the hoof-tracks of cattle. It was sickening, and made me more thirsty than before. I began to fear that something was wrong. When after another hour's ride we were still not in sight of the Milk River Valley I was sure of it.

"Bill," I said, "we have surely missed the trail that branched to the left. It is better to go on now, for this trail must go somewhere. I'm nearly dead, I'm so tired."

Bill gave no sign of having heard. He was walking with his head

down and needed constant encouragement with the spurs to keep him moving.

We were getting among the foot-hills, and when in despair I thought the trail had no end, I saw below me the Milk River Valley and I cried aloud, "The Witzels'."

There was the barb-wire gate, the log house and barn, the long hay-stack, just as it had been described to me. Bill whinnied hopefully and quickened his gait.

A pack of dogs of all colors, sizes, and breeds dashed out and barked at me as I rode into the yard. I slid off and threw the reins over Bill's head, and he, being a good cow-horse, stood as if nailed to the spot.

There was no response to my first timid knock upon the door. I knocked again, but only the yelping "ki-yis" answered.

What luck, what dreadful luck! I almost cried with disappointment.

There was nothing to do but wait until the Witzels should return, so I untied my "turkey," unsaddled Bill, and led him to the stable. Then I returned to the house and sat down on the door-step to wait.

The dogs howled at me and a million flies swarmed about me. The sun was blistering, and my face burned like fire from the wind. In desperation, and in fear lest I be fly-blown, I tried the kitchen door. To my joy it opened, and the dogs howled afresh as I went in and closed it behind me.

The kitchen was as neat as possible, with its oil-cloth table-cover and its orderly stack of dishes in the open cupboard. A few Indian trinkets hung on the wall, but otherwise one might have thought himself in a thrifty New England housewife's kitchen rather than that of a half-breed woman's on a reservation.

As I sat by the kitchen table trying to forget the gnawings of hunger my eyes fell upon a plate of cold fried eggs under a wire fly-screen.

I gazed at them fascinated; I could not take my eyes from them.

I felt surprised that I had never before noticed the luscious appearance presented by cold fried eggs. They seemed to hypnotize me, and before I knew it I was over looking at them through the fly-screen. I tried to think of the blessed immortality of the soul and other things that would take my mind from them, but always my wistful thought returned to the eggs. At last the tempter whispered to me, "Just take a little bite." I did, and so I fell. The next thing I realized was wiping my greasy fingers on the roller towel. No longer hungry, but tired to the point of exhaustion, I laid down on the clean floor and put my guilty head upon my turkey.

Tired as I was, I could not sleep for the flies. The fly-screen which

had covered the eggs I tried putting over my face like a base-ball mask. This scheme was successful until the flies discovered that they could get at me by crawling under the edges.

Again the tempter came to me, whispering, "Why don't you go and find a bedroom?" I eased my conscience by arguing that the Witzels' was a stopping-place, where they expected people to make themselves at home, and so I followed the tempter's suggestion. I could find but one bedroom in the house, which seemed strange, considering the Witzels kept travellers. This room seemed to contain articles belonging to the landlord and landlady, but I presumed that they vacated it when strangers arrived.

I turned in and put the fly-screen over my face once more, covering the edge with a towel. I slept like a babe in its cradle, while the flies walking on the outside wrung their hands in impotent rage.

A rap on the door and a loud laugh awakened me. Startled, I sat bolt upright and my mask fell off. A stout man in store clothes was grinning in the doorway.

"How air you, Mrs. Bird? You aims to get the drop on the flies, I see."

"Mrs. Bird!" I had been called a bird before, but nobody ever called me "Mrs." bird. What did he mean?

"Levi home?" asked the stout man.

"Levi who?"

"Why, your husband," answered the man in surprise.

"Who lives here?" I demanded.

"Birds—Levi Bird," replied the stranger, staring at me with astonished eyes.

"What?" I exclaimed in horror. "Isn't this the Witzels'?"

"No, they live nine miles up the creek."

"Mercy! Mercy!" I cried, growing red.

While the stranger saddled Bill I pulled the covers up over the hole I had made in the Birds' bed.

As I climbed stiffly into the saddle the stout man assured me cheerfully that if I followed the creek and kept my horse moving lively, I would reach the Witzels' by dark.

I never learned how the Birds solved the mystery of the empty egg-plate and the rumpled sheets, for Bill and I left no other trace behind us, but by the time we reached the Witzels', which was long after dark, we were too desperate to care if a thousand Birds were on our trail.

## II.

THE Witzels were quarter-breeds, and though they lived in a log house, it was furnished after the fashion of the home of any Eastern family in moderate circumstances.

The girls had been graduated from Oberlin College, and the family, though pleasant, were of a type too familiar to be interesting.

"It's a plain trail from here to 'Hod Main's,'" said Mrs. Witzel the next morning, while I was climbing stiffly into the saddle from a chair. "It is about twenty-five miles, but you should make it by noon."

I waved my hand in farewell, and, touching "Bill" with the spurs, we were soon galloping among the foothills. Each hour the mountains grew nearer, and always we were climbing a little. Though we met no one, the sense of loneliness and desolation which I felt upon the prairies was gone.

I came upon a herd of horses feeding on a high plateau, or mesa. They threw up their heads and looked at me for a moment with wild, frightened eyes, and then, as though moved by a common impulse, they ran. Among the last in the flying herd was an old pinto pony. He strained every nerve to keep up, but in vain, he was too old and weak. Seeming to realize the hopelessness of keeping pace with the rest, he suddenly dropped out and stood stock still, while the herd went on. The deep, sunken place above his eyes showed his age, and his peaked hip-bones and ribs told of the old pinto pony's bitter struggle for existence. As he stood outlined against the sky, with drooping head and wistful eyes, his whole appearance indicative of the helplessness of age, I thought, "How like life. We grow old, we drop out, and—the herd goes on."

Shortly after noon from Duck Lake Ridge, which is the watershed dividing the streams of the Arctic and Atlantic Oceans, I saw below me the beautiful St. Mary's Lakes and, what was more important to me just then, Main's log house and barn.

The family were all in evidence when I rode down the hill and into the door-yard. There was a white man with a mound of gray hair on the top of his head apparently trying to hold up the jamb of the door with his shoulder; he wore a pair of dull yellow trousers that were laid in box pleats at his waist. They bloused fore and aft. When ready to retire for the night, all he had to do was to pull out the nail which attached his trousers to his one suspender, shake himself, and, voila! his troubles were over.

Mrs. Main, a broad-faced squaw, with little, pig-like eyes, stood sullen and unsmiling in the doorway. Two little half-breeds hung their fingers in their mouths and stared. Nobody spoke as I rode up, nobody gave me a word of greeting.

"Can I get dinner and remain over night?" I asked.

"Eh," grunted the squaw in assent.

"I gass so," drawled the squaw-man, making no move to assist me.

"Take de hoss, 'Hot' Main," ordered the squaw sharply, and "Hot" languidly led "Bill" to the stable.

"Poot your turkey in dere," said the squaw, pointing to a room which had three beds in it and smelled like a dog-show. I put the flour-sack containing my clothing upon the floor and stretched out wearily upon the bed. I was stiff in every joint, and my face was blistered with the sun and wind.

I was startled from a sound sleep by the yell of "grub" from the squaw, who thrust her head in the door and looked around the room suspiciously to see if I had stolen any of the furniture. From the scuffling of feet over the bare floor outside I inferred there were other boarders, so I thought perhaps etiquette demanded that I should remove my revolver and spurs, which I did.

When I went into the dining-room each boarder was dragging his chair to his chosen place at the long table.

"I'll make you acquainted with 'Two-Dog-Jack,' said the landlord with a flourish of his hand towards a squat individual with a leather bracelet on his wrist and a long skinning-knife in a leather case at his belt.

"Proud to know you," said "Two-Dog-Jack" heartily as he gripped my hand.

"This gent is Lawyer Baird from Choteau," continued "Hot," pointing with his thumb towards an undersized man wearing a pompadour and the collar with the high points affected by the statesmen of many years ago.

"We are greatly honored," said the lawyer with impressive emphasis as he scraped his toe behind the heel of the other shoe in a low bow. "Seldom a fair——"

"Make you acquainted with Bacon-Rind-Dick," interrupted the landlord, nodding towards a skinny, grinning person whose eyes were so close together that they looked like a single narrow slit.

"Bacon-Rind" swallowed his Adam's apple and seemed to be trying to speak.

"These gents is 'Doc' Robinson and 'Big' Steve, the stage driver," said the master of ceremonies with a concluding flourish.

"Doc" Robinson had a blue polka-dot handkerchief draped around the neck of his mouse-colored undershirt. He had the face of Anton Lang, who enacted the Christus in the Passion Play at Oberammergau two summers ago. "Big Steve" was tall, long-legged, swaggering, and wore his trousers inside his wrinkled boot-legs.

"Pitch right in," urged the landlord hospitably as we drew up to the table. "Shoot out yer arm and git what you want. If you can't reach, holler," and he made a swipe at a row of flies roosting on the sugar-bowl.

"Set the axle-grease a-rollin'," called "Two-Dog-Jack," and the butter was passed to him without comment. There was a great clatter-



ing of knives and forks, and the squaw in her moccasins stepped noiselessly and quickly around the table pouring tea and coffee, while the little half-breeds flattened their noses against the window-pane and looked in hungrily.

Conversation languished till "Two-Dog-Jack" turned to me with a chunk of bread in his cheek that made it stick out like a squirrel's pouch.

"Touristin'?" he inquired.

"Something of the sort," I replied.

"Back East, I s'pose."

"Philadelphia."

"Gawd!" ejaculated "Two-Dog," "ain't that purty fur from here?"

"I wouldn't like to walk it."

"When I make my stake," said "Two-Dog" emphatically, "I'm goin' to git a good pack out-fit and take in that country."

"You'll have to ile up yer ha'r good and plenty with b'ar grease and git a b'iled shirt if you go back among them dudes," observed "Doc" Robinson in the tone of one who knew.

"I ain't no slouch when I'm dressed up," asserted "Two-Dog" in a boastful voice.

The conversation drifted to geniuses, and a hot discussion ensued between the lawyer from Choteau and "Two-Dog-Jack" as to whether the latter could have filled Napoleon's place. "Two-Dog-Jack" argued that all he needed to show what was in him was opportunity, whereas the lawyer contended that geniuses were special creations of the Almighty, and he had never seen anything in "Two-Dog" to suggest that the Creator had given him any particular attention. "Two-Dog" pointed to the facts as evidences of genius that he could make a fish-net, shoe a horse, build a wagon or a boat, and cook a meal as good as any woman.

"You oughtn't to be hiding of yer light under a bushel basket," remarked the stage-driver sarcastically.

"That's Scripture, ain't it?" inquired "Two-Dog" suspiciously.

"You amazes me, 'Two-Dog,' certainly it air."

"I don't take much stock in them Scripture yarns," answered "Two-Dog" disparagingly. "But," he added as an afterthought, "I'd sure like to have tasted some of that angel grub, 'manner,' I reckon they call it, that fell when the outfit was pullin' their freight for Canaan."

"You'll never git foundered on no angel grub," drawled "Hot" Main, poising a knife laden with mashed potatoes in the air.

"Don't make no difference to me whar' I go when I gits over the 'Divide,'" replied "Two-Dog" in a tone of bravado, "but I'll take the best-travelled trail."

"'Hot,' mind dem flies in de milk," called the squaw from the kitchen door. With one skilful swipe of his long forefinger "Hot" removed the flies that had fallen in the pitcher and threw them viciously on the floor.

"Flies ain't so bad as they was," observed "Doc," fanning his face with his fork to disturb the swarm that buzzed around his head.

"Gosh! the chickens is walkin' in yer bread-pan," said the stage-driver, who, sitting at the end of the table, could see around the landlady's curves to the back of the stove, where her bread had been set to raise.

Mrs. "Hot" made a savage lunge at a pullet, which, with a terrified squawk, escaped through the window.

"Now look at dem tracks," she said plaintively, exhibiting the dough. "Hot, I'm goin' to kill dem chickens, dey's too much bodder."

"New tenderfoot up in Swift Current," announced "Bacon-Rind-Dick," as with a piece of bread he polished off his plate and carefully crossed his knife and fork upon it, signifying thereby that the meal was over as far as he was concerned. Everybody looked up with interest.

"What does he aim to do?" inquired "Doc."

"Ain't found yit; terrible clost-mouthed, high-collared dude," replied "Bacon-Rind."

"I'd like to git one of them Eastern tenderfeet up on the Swift Current Pass," said the stage-driver with a sneer that brought the color to my face. The habitual slur of the average Westerner at Eastern people had gradually grown to be a sensitive point with me.

"Any particular reason for thinking that because a man wears a collar and washes behind his ears once in a while that he is lacking in physical courage?" I asked tartly.

"Mebbv not," again sneered Big Steve, "but I'll bet an ox-team couldn't git no tourist over that Pass."

"What would you like to bet?" I asked, and I expect there was an angry sparkle in my eyes. Silence had fallen upon the table.

"I'll bet a hundred round of 30-30 rifle cartridges, and I'll git no takers," swaggered the stage-driver.

"Oh, yes, you will," I answered, and my lips came together as they sometimes have a trick of doing. "I'll take your wager."

"You!" exclaimed the stage-driver mockingly.

"Don't do nuthin' like that," expostulated "Doc" Robinson.

"No woman ever went over that Pass. You couldn't do it," said "Two-Dog-Jack" in a startled voice.

"Your opinion is premature," I said defiantly as I rose from the table. "You all hear, I have taken the wager. If I lose, I will pay my bet, but—I mean to win."

"And if you do," cried "Two-Dog" excitedly, "you'll git your ca'tridges or we'll take 'em out of his hide."

And this was the origin of the most exciting adventure I have ever had. The next morning I started for Swift Current, to hire a guide to show me the trail over the terrible Swift Current Pass.

### III.

Two days later, having reached Swift Current, the mining camp which was my destination, I met no less a person than Old Man McNeil, famous throughout the mountains as a bear hunter and former Hudson Bay trapper.

Our meeting was most informal. I was on my hands and knees drinking from a brook like a chicken when I was startled by a voice behind me saying, "You're gittin' of your foretop wet." Turning, I saw a white-haired, weather-beaten old man on horseback regarding me with an amused smile. I presumed that he meant my front hair, which, having slipped from its combs, floated on the water when I drank.

I laughed, and so did he, and thus we became acquainted. I liked my new acquaintance. I liked his gentle manner, his quaint humor, and the kindness of his steady blue eyes as they looked down upon me. Having, by a few skilful questions, gratified his curiosity concerning me, he was picking up his reins to ride on when I asked impulsively,—

"Would you take me over the Swift Current Pass?"

"Not on yer sweet life!" was his quick reply, his face showing amazement.

"Why not?"

"Because," with undeniable candor, "it's a h—ll of a trail and you couldn't nowise make it."

"But I'm determined to go."

The old man looked sceptical.

"No woman ever went over that trail," he said. "It's the roughest in this country. A man or a horse loses his footin' on that Pass and it's all day with him. Nothing to ketch to. It's down, down fer more'n a thousand feet. Carcasses of three pack-horses that went over this spring lyin' down there with the buzzards roostin' on 'em. Guess you'd be a good pickin' fer a buzzard." This last remark being plainly intended as a compliment.

"Now, listen," I said determinedly; "I'm bound to go. I will go. If you won't take me, someone else will, and I mean to win my bet from Big Steve."

"What's that?" He was at once all interest, so I told him of the wager. When I had finished he said with deliberation:

"I seems to feel that it air a duty I owes to the camp to git them ca'tridges out'n the meanest skunk that ever drawed breath in the

Strip. George Milan, that's my pardner, will say I'm plumb locoed, but if you are willin' to take yer chances and kin keep a stiff upper lip, I'll try and pack you over the Pass."

"Take me and see," I exclaimed joyously, relieved to have obtained such a guide.

It was agreed that the next day should be spent in getting the pack outfit ready, and that we should start at sunrise of the second day.

The news soon spread through the camp that the "new girl" was going over the Swift Current Pass, and I became the object of a curiosity even greater than before. Divers prominent citizens of the camp found they had business which necessitated a call at the log cabin where I was staying with a motherly, kind-hearted Scotch woman. French Pete came to borrow baking-powder. Percy De Wolf, a notorious horse-thief, borrowed nails. "Dad" Walker brought some brook trout for our supper, and Bill Jeffries, proprietor of the leading saloon, found he needed suspender buttons. What most impressed me was the gravity of these men when they said simply, "It's a rough trail." They were all men who had faced many hardships and dangers, they were of few words, and I knew that the acknowledgment that it was "rough" meant the limit.

The night before our start I lay for hours staring into the darkness, and the thoughts of what the morrow had in store for me almost set my teeth chattering. Great heights have a terror for me. I slept at last, and awakened only when the Scotchwoman had served breakfast. We ate in silence, and then, dressed in thick-soled boots, flannel blouse, and ankle-length divided skirt, I was ready to start.

"You will reach the summit all right, I know," said the woman gravely, "but just in case—in case you don't you had better leave an address with me." So with a hand that shook in spite of me, I wrote an address for her and said good-by.

Old Man McNeil was putting the finishing touches on a "diamond hitch" when I emerged from the pine-trees which surrounded his cabin. He looked surprised and pleased to see me on time.

"George Milan said I'd haf to set around and wait an hour or so—that is, if you didn't back out altogether," said the old man as he led my long-legged horse to a stump for me to get on. "How's yer courage holdin' out?"

"Never better," and I forced a wan smile.

"Folly the trail thar' and I'll come behind with the pack-horse."

As we moved away I saw the disdainful face of George Milan peering from behind a tree.

I had five miles in which to shiver and shake before reaching the foot of the mountain. Being prone to underestimate rather than overestimate dangers, the feeling of dread which possessed me was most

unusual. Each time that I looked back I noticed that Old Man McNeil was watching me closely. The trail, winding in and out among the trees and through the underbrush, was narrow, and many times only the intelligence of Molly, the pack-horse, and the excellence of the "diamond hitch" kept our outfit from being scraped off.

Once when I spurred my stubborn horse till he jumped a fallen log that lay across the trail Old Man McNeil called out encouragingly, "You'll do." But this comforted me little, for though it might prove to him I could ride a horse, it did not prove to me that I should not lose my head on the mountain pass. We came to an open space after two-hours' riding and, reining in his horse, my guide said, as he pointed upward, "Thar's yer trail."

"What!" I exclaimed in horror.

"That's it," he replied grimly.

After a third of the way up, the mountain looked almost perpendicular. One could scarcely believe a mountain sheep could find footing, much less a clumsy horse and human beings.

"Want to go back?" he asked.

"No," I said desperately.

While we were talking a man appeared in the trail ahead of us, and a look of relief came into Old Man McNeil's face as he recognized him. "Frank, I wish you'd give us a lift up to the summit," and the old man's voice was almost pleading. I heard him say in an undertone, "I'm plumb skeered somethin' 'll happen."

"Frank" cheerfully turned and retraced his steps.

When we reached the base of the mountain "Old Man McNeil" went ahead, Frank led the pack-horse, and I was to lead "Bill."

"Ride as long as you kin," said Frank, "fer though it's only a mile or a little over to the top, thar's a rise of fifteen hundred feet, and you'll be played out when you gits thar. If yer horse slips, let him go. Don't try to hang to the bridle."

When we began to climb I rode but a little way, for the ascent at once grew so steep that my horse stood with heaving sides and legs trembling under him. I had not the heart to ride farther. With my arms slipped through the reins, I pulled myself up by the scrub bushes on either side of the trail. These bushes gave me a feeling of security. But they grew fewer, till soon I could clutch only at clumps of bunch grass and stray roots. When even these were not there to help me, I knew the real danger and test of my courage had come. I determined, no matter what happened, I should not whimper, and if my foolhardy adventure were to be my last, they should never know the fear that was in my heart. Therefore, when they called down every moment or so, "How goes it?" I cried back: "All right. I'm coming."

The ascent kept growing steeper, and finally I could no longer stand,

but literally crawled on my hands and knees. There were rocks like high steps, where the horse had to rise on his hind feet and jump in order to get on top of them.

As he scrambled and snorted, eager to catch the other horses, the danger of being stepped on added to my difficulties. I could not stay far enough ahead to keep the length of the rein between us. When exhausted, I was obliged to turn cautiously, dig my heels in the trail, and hold to the bit with both hands to keep him from crowding past me. The trail wound until we were on the edge of a precipice and I could lead him no longer. When we lost sight of the other horses he became unmanageable. I could have killed him, I was so angry, but there was nothing to do but turn him loose and let him take his chances. I crawled to his side next the mountain, quickly slipped off his bridle and hung it on the pommel, knowing that a horse keeps his feet better with a free head. As he lunged forward in his frantic haste, I fully expected to see him catch the stirrup or bridle straps on a projecting rock and go over the edge.

The windings of the trail, which led wherever there was a shelf of rock on which to find a foothold, had taken the rest above me, and the scrambling of the horses sent down showers of dirt and pebbles. If the horse farthest up had lost his footing, he would have knocked the rest of us off the mountain like so many tenpins. I happened to look up when my horse first noticed his surroundings. His thoughts were as plainly read by his expression as those of a human being. He stopped for a moment, boldly outlined. He looked at the jagged peaks of neighboring mountains with which he was almost on a level; at the valley so far below that it looked purple and blurred; at the stream of water falling some four hundred feet over a wall of rock. He looked at the abyss which lay beneath him, and he threw up his head with quivering nostrils and eyes that bulged, astonishment and fear in his face and attitude. Then he began to climb madly, and I thought each leap that he gave in his blind fright would be his last.

The trail was like the cornice of a house. It was only a few inches wide, perhaps eight or ten, and slanting. Though I hugged the mountain side, my range of vision took in the horrible depths below. Ever and anon the voice of my guide came down to me, "How goes it?" and always my reply went up, "All right, I'm coming." At last the trail turned from the edge of the precipice and went straight up to the narrow peak we were trying to reach. In some way I got off the trail on to the game trail, made by the pointed hoofs of the mountain goat and sheep. The right trail was faint at best, and I crawled some ten feet from it before I noticed my mistake. I dared not go straight across, but I thought I could reach it again by going obliquely. Above me I could see, or thought I could, enough rocks for hand and foot-

holds until I should get into the trail once more. I was crawling over shale which looked like jagged pieces of slate, and each time I moved I sent a sheet of it rattling down the mountain.

Inch by inch I was climbing now, reaching here for a rock upon which to put my hand, there for one upon which to rest my foot. Sometimes the rocks were loose and pulled out with a touch; again they held. It was like climbing the side of a steep slate roof. Between my set teeth I was muttering, "Steady now, keep cool. You must go on. You must, you must." And then terror would conquer for a moment and I would cry, "Oh, this is horrible! How can I go on?"

I had miscalculated the distance between the rocks that seemingly would hold. They were much farther apart than they looked from below. Finally the tiny rocks upon which my feet rested gave way, and those to which I clung, not firm enough to stand the strain, gave way also, and I began to slip, slip down the side. Desperately I reached right and left, clutching at anything, everything. All gave way.

"It is the end," I whispered hoarsely. "Should I scream?" "No," Reason answered, "it is too late."

A sickening sensation came over me. Still sliding, still reaching frantically for something that would hold, a thousand thoughts flashed through my mind. I thought of the pack-horses far down below and of what they had told me of the one which flew to pieces as he bounded from rock to rock. I thought of the bamboo fishing-rod I had borrowed in the East, and which only myself knew where to return. I pitied myself that life was ending so soon. I thought it strange that even at such a time the habit of analyzing my sensations should assert itself.

My hands were cut and bleeding from digging them in the shale trying to stop myself. I grew nauseated. I felt a weakness coming over me. As I slipped faster and faster, an impulse seized me to throw up my hands and fall backward. It was as if some great force were pulling at my shoulders to drag me over. I wished that I might faint and end the agony. I could hold up my head no longer. As I slid, the rocks cut my cheek cruelly. When I was so near the edge that hope seemed gone, one foot struck a rock which held my weight. At the same time I heard my guide's voice calling, "Are you coming?"

"No, no," I cried out. The cry was too weak to be heard. I tried again, but knew they could not hear me. Oh, if they would only come before the rock gave way. There was a wait that seemed endless, and I scarcely breathed, lest the jar dislodge my foothold. Then I heard Old Man McNeil call down: "My God! Frank, run! run! Turn the horses loose and run."

I heard them coming, and I fell to shaking so, as I laid hugging the side like a great star-fish, that I made the shale rattle. With their faces grown white, they reached me almost at the same time.

Old Man McNeil stood with one foot in the trail reaching out a hand to Frank, who walked cautiously towards me digging his spiked shoes in at every step until he could touch my extended hand. Thus we formed a chain, and they pulled me back into the trail, for I could not stand.

"I'm awfully sorry to have been so much trouble," I said humbly.

"There ain't no call to apologize," replied Old Man McNeil grimly.

"It war a close squeak," was Frank's laconic comment. It was only when we reached the summit and I saw Old Man McNeil's face relax and the look of relief which came over it that I realized what an anxious time it had been for him also.

"There ain't no yeller streak up your back," was the ambiguous compliment paid me by Old Man McNeil and the only one, though I learned afterwards that the story of our climb was the choicest tale in his repertoire, and the one he related oftenest, to the great disgust of George Milan.

Big Steve at first refused to believe that I had won. But when convinced, he paid his wager, and Old Man McNeil and I, who became the best of friends, had the pleasure of shooting his cartridges away at a band of mountain goats.



## DISTANCE

BY LOUISE DRISCOLL

IT is not miles that lie between us, sweet,  
Miles may be traversed soon by willing feet.

Nor is it time that keeps me far from you,  
Love mocks at time with hours forever new.

Nay, though I came and stood now at your side,  
The miles would lie between and time divide.

Is it not strange that I, who love you so,  
Watch not your coming, heed not when you go?

I, who would keep you close with tenderest care,  
Comfort when weary, know not how you fare.

It is not miles that lie between us, sweet,  
Miles may be traversed soon by willing feet.

Nay, though I came and stood now at your side,  
The miles would lie between and time divide.



# THE FINAL PROPOSITIONS

*By Cyrus Townsend Brady*

*Author of "When Blades are Out and Love's Afield," "Hohenzollern,"  
"The Quiberon Touch," etc.*



## I.

### AT THE TOP OF THE HILL.

THERE wasn't a harder body of fighters in the army of the United States than "Kirke's Lambs." The only resemblance between this modern regiment and the famous body of horse which divided dishonors with Jeffreys after Sedgemoor, nearly two hundred years before, was in the name of their commanders, for they were held under too iron a rule to degenerate into brutal and ferocious excesses. Besides, Kirke and the generals he served under always gave that body of hard riders plenty to do, so that they found an easy vent for their superfluous energies in legitimate fighting—if any can be so called.

Kirke had grown up with the regiment from a subaltern to the colonel. Drafts had restored its depleted members from time to time, but the Civil War in the spring of 1865 was about over, and it was not considered necessary to complete its quota by an infusion of new blood then. There was but a handful of them left, therefore. The others—well, they said the bodies of "Kirke's Lambs" blazed a pathway from the Mississippi to the sea.

Kirke was an iron man everywhere and in everything,—in his business, in his regiment, and in his family, which now consisted of a solitary woman. The single child which had blessed the union had died before the war. The woman had been left alone for over four years. Kirke had never left the front and what he conceived to be his duty. He was a reticent, self-contained, undemonstrative man, whose affection made no show on the surface, though the current of it ran very still and deep. He actually idolized the woman who bore his name and had borne his son. On the death of that son he had made no great display of grief, though it cut him deeply to the heart; and in general he gave little outward evidence of any strong affection to the poor, weak wife left so much alone and pining, like every woman in a like case.

She was a nervous, high-strung little body, utterly unable to see

beneath the outward show; not strong enough to fathom Kirke's depths,—her heart was too light a plummet,—and it was a wonder to Jack Broadhead, who was Kirke's dearest friend and the second in command of the "Lambs," how she ever inspired the devotion that he, with better insight, divined that Kirke cherished for her.

Well, what was left of the regiment was out scouting. It had been ordered to clear up the remains of a Carolina brigade of Confederates which had been making things pleasant for the left flank of Sherman's army all the way to the sea and afterwards. One morning in February a party of some two hundred and fifty troopers, all that was left of the "Lambs," galloped over a rough road up a narrow valley towards the base of a buttress-like, tree-clad hill, upon the top of which lay ensconced the remains of that brigade.

They called it a brigade in the Confederate army, but it was really no more of a brigade than were some of Washington's during the Revolution: it was a handful of perhaps one hundred and fifty desperate, half-starved, ragged men, whose rifles and the bronzed, tense look of the hunted veteran at bay alone proclaimed them soldiers. They lay snug behind a hastily improvised breastwork on the crest of the hill. And they had retreated just as far as they intended to go. This was the limit.

Above them from an impromptu tree-trunk staff flapped and fluttered a ragged and tattered Confederate flag—their last. They might have retreated farther, but to have gone northward would have thrown them into the arms of a division ranging the country, which would mean their annihilation, or, if they scattered, their disintegration. Kirke had been pursuing them for a day or two. They knew his detachment, and in a spirit of reckless pugnacity they determined to have one good, square, stand-up fight before they quit the game, which everybody now knew was a losing one from the Confederate stand-point, with the inevitable end in plain sight. They had fought together during four years; they would fight together once more, let the end be what it would. A dangerous crowd to tackle.

With a skill which should have been manipulating an army, Hoyle, the Brigadier-General in command of the remains, had disposed his men so that there was only one practicable way to attack them, and that was straight up the mountain. Their flanks were protected by ravines, and their rear could not be come at save by a detour of many miles over the mountains.

Kirke, halting his men at the foot of the hill, realized the situation as soon as he saw it. Could they take the hill by a direct front attack in the face of such a body of men, desperate old soldiers, who could shoot as straight and as fast as the remnants of that brigade could? Yet what else was there to do? He could not retire; he had been

directed to put that brigade out of action, capture, or destroy it. He could not besiege it and starve it out. It was a problem.

While he was hesitating, Jack Broadhead, who had been left behind at head-quarters for a day, came galloping up with a few troopers as his escort. His quick, soldierly eye took in the desperate situation. After the necessary salutes had been exchanged a little conversation took place.

"That is a strong position, Bob."

"It is that, Jack."

"That fellow is a soldier, every inch of him."

"We knew that before."

"Yes. Well, what are you going to do about it?"

"I hardly know. Think we can take it?"

"Well, I don't know. Looks dubious. But we've got a crowd here that will storm hell itself if somebody leads, you know."

"I'll lead, but this is worse than hell."

"Oh, by the way," Broadhead burst out, as a flash of recollection came to him, "I have a letter for you. It came just as I was leaving head-quarters."

He fumbled in the breast of his jacket, and as Kirke stretched out his hand indifferently he gave him the letter. The man's face changed slightly. A look of softness mitigated the iron aspect of his visage.

"Ah," he said in a rarely communicative moment, "from my wife."

He tore it open. A glance put him in possession of its contents. Again his face changed. It was hard and grim at best, but never, thought Broadhead, as he idly watched him, had he exhibited a grimmer and harder look than at this moment. And there was a gleam almost of agony in the man's eyes. His lips trembled—and for Kirke's lips to tremble was a thing unheard of! Broadhead saw him clench his teeth together and by a mighty effort regain his self-control. During the struggle he had crushed the letter in his hand.

After a minute he unclosed his fingers, smoothed out the paper, took out his pencil, and wrote a brief endorsement upon the bottom of it, signed his name, folded it up, and thrust it in the pocket of his coat.

"If anything happens to me, Broadhead,"—and there was a harsher ring than usual in his voice,—“this letter is to go back—to—to—my—the writer.”

"Very good," said Broadhead, who knew his superior too well to question him as to what had occurred. "I take it that you have decided to attack?"

"Yes. Men," said Kirke, wheeling his horse and facing the iron veterans who had come to love him as few soldiers were ever loved by

their men, "there is that rebel brigade on the top of that hill—what's left of them. You know what they are. We have tested their mettle in a dozen fights. Now we have to wipe them out. It is probable that a large part of us will be wiped out in the process, but that's no matter. Dismount and tie the horses. We want every man in action. Leave your sabres. We'll depend upon carbines and revolvers. We'll go up and pull that flag off that hill. The trees will cover us till we get near the crest. Halt there, form up, and make a rush for it. Save your fire until you get to the top."

The cheer that came in response was more like the growl of an angry animal. The men instantly followed the example of their leader and dismounted. Their horses were tied to the trees and saplings in the valley, and the men, circling the hill in a long line with Kirke in the centre and well in the lead, followed by Broadhead a short distance after, began to move up the slope through the trees.

It was as still as death at the top. There was no sign of life there save the flag which rippled and fluttered gayly in the breeze. It was a bright, sunny morning. The cool touch of spring in the air made life sweet to all that possessed it. In the grim silence the men clambered up the steep slope and slowly neared the crest. Suddenly there was a puff of white smoke from the little log breastwork on the top. A moment later the crack of a rifle rolled down the hill, and the man nearest Kirke fell on the slope, rolled against a tree, and lay still. He had rashly exposed himself, and he was gone. They were good shots, those Johnnies.

The men as they advanced sought instinctively such cover as they could find, advancing cautiously but rapidly from tree to tree. Every once in a while, however, one of them would expose himself in the open, and the exposure was always followed by a shot which more than once caught its mark. The crest was bare of trees, and the command arrived at the edge of the clearing with some loss, and carefully concentrated, hesitating a moment before breaking out into the open and rushing the hill.

"Now, men," said Kirke, "you see what we have to do. The quicker we do it, the better for us. Give me that flag," he added, turning to the color-bearer. "Gibson,"—to his bugler,—“stand by to sound the charge when I give the signal.”

There was nothing dramatic about Kirke, it was all a matter of pure business with him, but the men thought they had never seen so splendid a figure as he presented when he tore off his cap, jerked his revolver from his belt, seized the flag with his left hand, and stepped out in the open.

He nodded his head to the alert Gibson, and the shrill notes of the charge echoed through the hills. Ere it had died away the men heard

their Colonel say, "Come on!" It was always Kirke's way to say "Come" rather than "Go."

With a mighty roar they sprang from the shelter of the trees and dashed for the ridge. A terrific volley greeted them. With a crash like thunder, which echoed and reëchoed through the hills, the Confederate fire was poured upon them. Had it not been that most of the men, firing down the hill, overshot the mark the "Lambs" would have been blown into eternity. As it was, many of them fell, but the rest plunged dauntlessly into the smoke through which the red of the flag could dimly be discerned waving in the advance.

Again the rifles of the brigade cracked out, and this time sent their messengers of death crashing full into the bosom of Kirke's men. This time the carnage was terrible; there were many dead, but the blood of the living was up: they would have charged a moving express train. They tore recklessly through the smoke towards the top, following the flag.

Before the rifles could be reloaded the "Lambs" were at the breast-work, Kirke still in the lead. To leap the log walls was the work of a moment. The brigade was ready for them. But now the carbines cracked again and again; there was a grim, ghastly, awful struggle on the top of that hill around the base of that flagstaff—then silence.

When it stopped the few "Lambs" who were left leaned panting on their carbines, blood dripping from the gun-stocks, surveying the tangled mass of dead and dying. The brigade had been annihilated.

Broadhead sprang to the staff to haul down the flag. He was non-plussed to find that there were no halliards, and that someone had evidently climbed a tree, which had been denuded of its limbs for the purpose, and nailed the flag there. He turned to look for Kirke, when, in the smoke that yet covered the field, he distinctly saw the man lift his revolver, pull its trigger, and blow out his brains.

In the confusion that prevailed after the little battle, fortunately, no one noticed the action but himself. He was utterly at a loss to fathom the meaning of the suicide, but he quickly resolved that no one else should know of it.

They buried the brigade with the dead "Lambs" around the foot of the staff, and Broadhead left the flag flying above them. He might have chopped down the tree and taken it, but it seemed fitting that the men who had defended it should have that last honor. The wind would whip it out in a day or two at best. Taking their wounded, they retraced their steps as they could, the surviving men thinking that Kirke had been killed in the action, an opinion which Broadhead's report carefully fostered. Broadhead carefully preserved Kirke's revolver, which he took from his dead hand, the letter, which he found in his breast pocket, his watch and sword, and a lock of his black, curly hair.

## II.

### IN THE ROOM IN THE NIGHT.

WHEN the war was over, and they were mustered out soon afterwards, Broadhead hastened to Philadelphia and drove immediately to Kirke's house. It was empty. There was no sign of life about it. As he stopped on the doorstep in the late afternoon, wondering vaguely what had happened and what he should do next, the door of the adjoining house opened and a woman came out, of whom he made inquiry for Mrs. Kirke.

"Mrs. Kirke!" said the woman in surprise. "And who may you be, may I ask?"

"I am—I was—Colonel Kirke's dearest friend."

"Is Colonel Kirke dead?"

"Yes."

"And a good thing too," said the woman.

"Madam," cried Broadhead indignantly, "do you realize what you say?"

"Certainly I do. Don't you know about Mrs. Kirke?"

"No. Is she dead?"

"It would be better if she were," she answered. "She ran away two months ago with a man named Allen, and after she left she sent me a letter enclosing the key of her house and requesting that I give it to Colonel Kirke when he returned from the war. So long as he is gone, I guess you might as well have it. Wait, I'll fetch it."

The woman turned back into the house as she spoke. This, thought Broadhead sadly, was the explanation of it all. That letter. He had never examined it. He had held it sacred, but now he felt that he must read it. It might give him some clew as to the whereabouts of the woman. Yet he hesitated.

When the woman gave him the key he entered the lonely house. He went upstairs and sat down in Kirke's study, and there he read the letter. It was the letter of a weak, hysterical woman, reproaching her husband for his lack of love, his seeming neglect, for her loneliness, and ended by saying that she had gone off with a man who loved her, and that he should never see her again. And Kirke's endorsement was as brief and as terse as the man's character.

"I have been to blame," he had written. "I did love you. I do. God only knows how much. I hope you may be happy. We are about to attack a strong position. I feel sure that after it is over I shall trouble you no more. You can marry the man—damn him!—and be happy."

How characteristic that was, thought Jack Broadhead as he read,—that last touch! He cursed the man yet spared the woman. For a long

time Broadhead sat there in that house, thinking, thinking, thinking. He wondered if he were the only mourner for poor Kirke. The twilight and then the darkness came stealing over the town, and still he sat there. By and by he heard a step—a hesitant, faltering step—in the hallway. He remembered now that he had left the door open. He sat still and listened. The step mounted the stairs. It came along the short hall and stopped at the entrance of the library. He sat by the open window. The wandering figure was that of a woman. She saw in the darkness against the light from the street lamp outside the soldier.

"Robert! Robert!" she cried. "You have come back! Thank God!"

Broadhead rose to his feet.

"No," he said quietly, "it is not Colonel Kirke."

"Mr. Broadhead!" exclaimed the woman.

"Yes, Mrs.—Mrs.—er—Allen, is it not?"

"No, no!" she shrieked, shrinking back. "My—my husband?"

"Do you mean Colonel Kirke?"

"Yes. I have no other."

"And Allen?"

"He has cast me off, turned me away."

"Haven't you heard?"

"I have heard nothing. I have been blind—in hell—since——"

"Yes, I know."

"But Robert?"

"He is dead."

The woman sank into a chair, shuddering.

"When? How? Did he get my letter?"

"Yes. He was killed at the capture of a little hill in North Carolina on the day he received your letter. Here it is."

"Did he say anything before——"

"There is a message written in it."

"Give it me."

Striking a light at the gas-bracket, Broadhead handed her the letter. She read it through dry-eyed while he watched her. She had been a pretty, sweet, dainty, attractive-looking little woman, now she was a haggard, broken wreck.

"And he was killed by the enemy?" she asked at last.

"Madam," said Broadhead sternly, "you shall hear the truth. He shot himself on the top of the hill the day of the battle with this revolver," laying the weapon on the table. "Here is his sword, and his watch, and a lock of his hair. I suppose you don't care for them."

"I care for everything that belonged to him more than for Heaven itself."

"You are free now," said Broadhead; "you can marry your—your—friend."

"Never! He has driven me away, cast me off, and I hate him! I hated him from the very moment—I shall be free, anyway. He said nothing before he died?"

"Nothing."

"And this is all you can tell me?"

"All."

"Will you leave me now?"

"What, alone in this empty house?"

"It's my house, isn't it? I am still Mrs. Kirke, am I not?"

"Yes, of course, but—I——"

"Will you go, please? You have discharged your errand. You have told me the dreadful truth. For God's sake, leave me!"

"May I not do something——"

"Nothing—nothing. You may come back to-morrow morning and advise me what to do, if you will. I am alone now, you see."

Broadhead stood uncertainly before her.

"Go, go!" she pleaded. "Don't you see that I wish to be alone for a little? You have been very good to me. I thank you."

She hesitatingly put out her hand to him.

"Won't you shake hands with me?" she pleaded. "I did very wrong. I fell very low. But I am very sorry."

Upon an impulse for which he rejoiced ever after, Broadhead clasped the thin, tiny hand in his own, held it a moment, bent low over it, and, with old-fashioned gallantry, kissed it—that soiled, wasted hand!

"I forgive you," he said, and the voice of the dead seemed to speak to the woman through his lips.

He turned and left her alone,—alone in the darkness, alone with her memories, alone with her sorrow, alone with her repentance—alone with the weapon.

She lifted the heavy revolver with trembling hand. There was a single cartridge left in the chamber.

The next morning in great anxiety Broadhead came back to the house. He found the woman sitting quite white and still where he had left her, and the revolver was empty!



## ENOUGH

BY W. PFLUEGER

I HAVE had enough of women, and had enough of love,  
 But the land waits and the sea waits, and the open sky above.  
 Give me a long white road and the gray white path of the sea,  
 And the wind's will, and the bird's will, and the heartache still in me.



# TWO CALLS

*By Sara Cone Bryant*



## I.

### THE CALL OF THE WRONG RIGHT MAN.

**H**E was to sail for Paris the next morning, to be gone a year or two, and he had come to take the last of several farewells of the girl he had known best at college. She came into the lamplit parlor with a warm glow on either cheek and hand outstretched. "I'm *so* glad you came out," she said, answering the pressure of his fingers with a frank little squeeze; "I was almost afraid you couldn't, with so many last things to do."

"Well, you see," loosing her hand slowly, "you were the last."

"That means, I'm the—oh, how conceited of me!"

"No, exactly. It means you were the best."

"Nice boy! But I sha'n't count it. Sit down here by me—yes, here—and tell me what you have finally decided about living with Professor Dumont's friends."

"Oh, that; I hardly know yet, Mary. Stanwood thinks now that he will get around to Paris by midwinter, and he wants me to come in with him."

"Yes? So you don't want to make hard-and-fast arrangements, of course. You'll like being with Mr. Stanwood, won't you? Only think of the jolly times you'll have!"

"I suppose so"—absently—"oh, yes, of course; but the fact is, Mary, it doesn't look as jolly to me as it did a year ago. You see, I was a perfect kid, then——"

"I remember," mischievously.

"And everything suited me perfectly; but now——"

"But what, now? You don't mean you are losing your enthusiasm, Morris? I shall be absolutely disgusted with you if you dare to hint such a thing! Remember what all those artists told you; there isn't the least doubt about your gift; and you must not doubt it, not for an instant."

"That's all right, Mary, I didn't mean that. I meant something quite different. But I guess you'd be disgusted with me just the same; never mind it; let me show you——"

"No, tell me! What did you mean? I want to know. Of course I wouldn't be disgusted."

"I brought out my——"

"Aren't you going to tell me? I didn't think you would distrust my sympathy, after all these ages."

"I don't, Mary. It's one of the things I hold to. But—I—this time I don't want it; that's the truth."

"Oh, I beg your pardon——"

"Please don't! And don't look like that. Can't you do a little trusting, yourself, about now?"

"Why, yes, I will, only——"

"Only I was a blundering idiot, that's all. But don't be cross with me to-night."

"Our last night for ever so long. I should say not. Why, Morris, do you know, we've never quarrelled once this whole last year?"

"Yes, I know."

"It must be because you are such a lamb! I couldn't have made such a record with one of my born brothers, and you're only an adopted one, after all."

"Adopted—let me see—the last day of October, wasn't it, a year and a half ago?"

"How do you remember? I'm not sure."

"Aren't you? It was the day we went chestnutting in the Fells, and it blew so up on the ridges. Don't you remember, your hat blew off, and we chased it half a mile down hill? The wind made little curls all over your forehead, and you said it got in your eyes, and I had to tie your hat on for you."

"Oh, my 'Tam'! Was that the day? What a good time we had,—what good times we have always had, when you think of it?—and now you won't be here for any of them. It won't be the same thing at all!"

"Shall you miss me, little sister?"

"I shall that! Nothing but a lingering sense of the proprieties keeps me from falling on your neck and imploring you to stay."

"By Jove, Mary, I wish you would! Do you know, I rather think it would 'fill a long-felt want' if you would pursue that line of conduct. You couldn't try it,—just as an experiment,—could you?"

"I'm afraid I really couldn't. But it's a great regret to me, Morris. Morris! stop—what—— Oh, that wasn't nice of you—it wasn't like you! I shall never dare to be nice and comfortable and silly with you again. Go right over there and sit on that chair."

"Please, Mary."

"Are you going?"

"Forgive, little sister. I'll never do so any more. I promise. Are you really angry, dear?"

"Yes—I don't know—I'm surprised, and—and hurt; I thought you knew me better than to misunderstand my nonsense."

"I didn't misunderstand."

"You took advantage."

"I humbly ask your pardon. Please forgive me, Mary."

"Oh, of course I forgive you. But I don't like to have to. And I insist on the chair—yes, positively."

"Is this far enough?"

"That will do. Now let's forget it. I don't know what has got into us to-night; I ought to have said 'unberufen' when I boasted of our not quarrelling."

"But we haven't quarrelled; we've only been reprov'd; and one of us feels like a small bad boy in disgrace."

"Then the small boy shouldn't have been bad."

"Was he so very bad, Mary?"

"Don't you know he was? What does his conscience tell him?"

"He hasn't any, except what his sister kindly provides for him."

"Now, Morris," severely, "this is a very unpromising tone to take on the eve of departure for 'furrin lands'! I shall expect to hear bad news from gay Paris if you go there without a conscience."

"Ah, no, I don't think you will expect that; I hope you won't; you know better, don't you?"

"Oh, please! You didn't think I was in earnest? I never expect anything but good of you, Morris, of *course*! It just goes without saying."

"Thank you, little sister, it's awfully good of you to say so."

"Feel so, not 'say so.'"

"'Feel so,' then. I wonder if you have the least idea how much it helps a fellow to—to have—that to live up to?"

The girl looked up with a quick and shining seriousness in her eyes. "I think it helps us all, just the same way," she said,—"*people having faith in us, I mean. We just need to be believed in. And who should do it if the really truly friends didn't,—the people who honestly care about us?*"

"Do you—you do care—a little—about me, don't you, Mary?"

"Why, Morris! What a thing to ask, after all this time! Do you think I am such a deceitful person as that? Of course I care about you. I'm downright fond of you, indeed!"

"A little fonder of me than any of the other fellows?—than of Stanwood, for instance?"

"I never adopted any of the other fellows, did I, Morris?"

"Are you, Mary?"

"Am I what? I can't follow your English; let's get a less involved subject."

"I asked you if you like me just a little better than you like Stan-wood?"

"Why, Mo—— What has got into you to-night? Are you trying to tease me,—or are you—I hope you aren't so silly as to be jealous!"

"I am. I'm horribly, sickeningly jealous."

"Morris Daly! But no, I won't scold, when it's your last night; I should, though, if it weren't. Listen to me: You have not the least reason, not the least in the world; there is no one—*no one*—I have ever known so well as you. You have seemed to me—really, without any joking—like one of my own brothers ever since we adopted each other. Why, I thought you knew. I thought you were as sure of my friendship as I was of yours. Haven't you understood, after all?"

"Yes, I have understood perfectly."

"Then it's only a mood, isn't it? You don't really feel like—like that? Or did you think I would go about hunting for another—another—relative when you were gone?"

"No, I didn't think that."

"As if I would! If you desert me, I'll never have another. But you won't, will you?"

"Won't what?"

"Won't desert me—stop being my brother?"

"Are they quite the same thing?"

"Yes, of course they are. What do you mean?"

"Then it will do if I promise, won't it? I'll never desert you, Mary."

"Good. Now just add a little codicil, that you will never be so silly again as to be jealous of your—of—of me, and we'll shake hands on it."

"How smooth your hand is, Mary! I never felt any other hand at all like yours—no, don't take it away—just think of two whole years without being able to touch such a lovely, soft little hand!"

"Oh flatterer! Do you—er—really think it's nice, now?"

"I think it's the dearest, sweetest, prettiest, most adorable——"

"Oh, goodness, Morris, hold on! Or, rather, don't hold on; I wasn't fishing for a whale. And I think you'd really better let my hand go, now."

"Mary! Have you absolutely no feeling? Here I am going away for two years, perhaps more, and because I can't pretend not to care you laugh at me. I tell you, it's no joke to me."

"Morris"—indignantly—"it isn't a joke to me either; you needn't think it is."

"It seems to be."

"Nonsense! don't you see that I can't let you do—act—be—like this?"

"Mary——"

"Hush! We've never done—any of those things. You have always been so nice and so trustable, I never thought I should have to—to—laugh at you. I am just as sorry you are going as I can be, but I can't sit down and let you hold my hand and make sentimental speeches to me if I am. It is not like you, and it's not like me, and that's all there is about it."

"It isn't all, by a thousand miles. It hasn't anything to do with the case. I wasn't making sentimental speeches to you, I was simply telling the honest truth. I do think your hand is the dearest and prettiest hand in the whole world. And I don't see why I shouldn't say so!"

"You may say so if you like, but I tell you frankly, Morris, you are just spoiling my memories of you for the time to come. You have made me cross and miserable,—and—and everything!"

"I am sorry. Perhaps it would have been better if I hadn't come to-night."

"Perhaps it would—oh, no! I didn't mean that; we didn't either of us mean it,—something is wrong with the air, I guess, and it has got into our tempers. Morris, don't mind a word I've said. I am *terribly* sorry to have you go,—and I *know* you aren't sentimental. It is just that we have somehow got at cross purposes. It's all right, isn't it? We're friends again, aren't we?"

"Oh Mary,—for Heaven's sake! I'd rather endure anything than hear your motherly tone. Your magnanimity is enough to freeze a fellow's marrow."

"Well, really, Morris! I must say, I think you are just a little unreasonable to-night. When you find out what you do want me to do I will endeavor to entertain you more acceptably!"

"Mary, I—perhaps I am unreasonable—I—the fact is—I'm suffering; I have—a headache; I'll say good-night before I make any worse fool of myself. I——"

"Oh my dear boy! Why didn't you tell me so before? To think of your coming way out here!—and I've chattered like a magpie;—you poor, *poor* boy, to be scolded, and made miserable,—oh! sit down again, Morris, here,—take my hand! You are positively dizzy with pain. I'll get you mother's——"

"Mary, please come back. It's all right. Just a bad pain—for a minute—and I must say 'good-night.' Give me your hand again, dear—little sister. You won't quite forget me, will you, and you'll always believe in me?"

"Never, and always, Morris."

"Then—good-by, dear; are your eyes wet for me? I shall remember that; good-by, Mary."

"Oh, but I can't bear to have you go like this. Can't you stay

and let me do something for your head? No? Then if you must, of course,—but I am afraid you will remember how horrid I've been, and go away thinking bad things of me?"

"No, never. Let me go, little sister. I shall be all right to-morrow."

"Indeed, I hope so! And I hope you will have a beautiful trip. Good-by, Morris. I know you'll come back to us, famous—and happy. It is only 'Auf Wiedersehen,' after all, you know. Good-by, good-by!"

And she stood looking after him with dewy eyes and frankly wistful mouth till the door shut out his white young face. Then she went to the window and pushed up the shade to light his path between the trees. "Dear Morris," she murmured, "I'm so sorry I quarrelled with him, he is such a dear boy! I wonder—I hope—I hope I haven't been making a mistake all this time; he seemed somehow—I almost thought to-night he—oh, foolish! Of course he doesn't!" And with the shadow lingering but lightly on her face she turned down the lamp, locked the door, and tiptoed up the stairs to her chamber. Fifteen minutes later she was kneeling, in straightly hanging virginal white, by her bedside, her hands folded under her dropped forehead just as her baby hands had been taught to do at her first prayer. And after the whispered 'Amen' of her nightly petitions she added, lifting her face confidently in the darkness, "and, dear Father, bless Morris—and keep him good—and—and don't let him have a heartache for me! For Jesus' sake."

## II.

### THE CALL OF THE RIGHT WRONG MAN.

JACK STANWOOD thought in his indolently analytical way that Mary looked a trifle pale and tired when she came into the room the evening he called to bid her "good-by." But as he shook hands he reflected that she was such a nice girl that a little color, more or less, really made no difference; and then too her eyes were brighter than ever.

"So it is really to-morrow?" she said with an effect of cheerful interest as she sat down a little out of the lamp's rays.

"To-morrow, I believe; and we sail from New York at eight Tuesday morning. You will send me a steamer-letter, won't you?"

"Oh, don't you think they are bores? You don't want one really, do you?"

"Well, I like that! There's a cordial spirit for you. Of course I want one—a fat one too. I have seven or eight promised, but the list is incomplete without yours."

"Is it? Why? You know I am no literary genius."

"Au contraire, Mademoiselle. Who had the cleverest pen in our class?"

"Someone out of it, I guess. However, I dare say every one counts

when you are a few days out. I will write you one, of course—if you care about it.”

“Then that’s settled. Be sure you send it to-morrow, or I shall be cheated out of it after all.”

“I will be sure.”

“I heard from Daly this week.”

“Oh, did you? He is well, I hope. And is he working hard? I haven’t heard for nearly two months.”

“Old chap’s busy, probably; he never was much of a letter-writer. We are going to room together this fall.”

“That will be nice.”

“Yes, won’t it? It’s mighty jolly having ‘Mo’ over there. I expect we’ll have no end of a picnic while I stay.”

“Y-es—oh, yes, of course you will. That kind of happy-go-lucky, irresponsible living has such a fascination about it. I remember the studio quarter very well from our trip, two summers ago.”

“Why, look here, I forgot you had been there. Then you can tell me about our place. Do you happen to know where it is?”

“Yes. Have you your little Paris map here? So—see? Here is the building, off this little court near the square where the big Barrye lion is.”

“Is it a jolly old barracks? You don’t mind my making a guide-book of you, I hope?”

“Oh, no. There couldn’t, of course, be anything else of so much interest to you just now,—your going is so near.”

“But does it bore you? I don’t want to make a nuisance of myself, you know.”

“That’s an unkind cut. Have you forgotten how you helped me make out our itinerary before I went?”

“So I did. You had one of those little satchel guides, didn’t you?”

“Yes, the little red leather one. We took it up in the woods, I think, one afternoon.”

“Yes, I remember, we went down by the pool and sat under the pines. We’ve had some great old walks up in those Fells, haven’t we, Mary?”

“We certainly have. That was a lovely day”—dreamily. “I remember so well how we—er—how fine it was, you know, so clear, and not too hot, and that.”

“Yes. After all, there’s nothing like New England for woods! I have been in the Rockies and in Cuban jungles, but the woods here have a quality, an atmosphere, those great forests utterly lack.”

“I wonder if it isn’t the atmosphere of intimacy? That has always seemed to me their peculiar charm.”

“I believe that is it. Now, in the forests of Washington and Montana——”

"Yes, tell me about them?"

"A man is utterly alone with the vastness—he is confronted with the mighty indifference of its majesty. And then too you go into the 'bush' with a spirit of conquest. You walk through our wood-paths because you are invited, and every bush and flower and bird greets you with open heart. But in the wilds out there,"—he paused with a glance of deprecatory question, but the girl's intense, listening look urged him on,—“there,—why, in those huge expanses of forest, where a path means the passage of innumerable wild beasts, and where the towering, ragged peaks hurl great stones, out of pure disdain, at the pigmy foot-hills beneath them, a man lives in awe. It makes you feel, with the great Hebrew philosopher, that the world hasn't waited untold ages for your arrival to explain things. No,”—reflectively—“there is none, absolutely none, of the confidential quality of our woodland in those places.”

His companion let the held breath quiver outward softly. “Ah,” she breathed, “I should like to feel that other once,—that solitude, and the grandeur of its strength and simplicity!”

“Yes.” To the girl's reading eyes a tingling spirituality overcrept the habitual indifferent nonchalance of the young man's face, revealing the underlying power of the personality which from the first she had divined as he added, very simply, “It is the holiest feeling I know.”

There was a moment's silence. The man, unconsciously soothed and stimulated by the perfection of the girl's unrecognized sympathy, passed again in memory into the atmosphere of mountain adventure and wild freedom; the girl, her whole consciousness filled with an aching protest against his unrecognition, cried dumbly, “Oh, I could give you so much, keep you so true to those heights, if you would only let me! Why can't you see?” And for fear the cry should come to voice she laughed, with a jarring lightness which hurt her own ear.

“It's a far cry from the Rockies to the Latin Quarter,” she said. “But you will like that too when you get into it.”

The man came all the way back in an instant. “Surely,” he answered, smiling, “a little of everything makes up the world.”

“And you don't care for more than a little of anything, do you?”

“You might say, ‘care more than a little for anything,’ and hit it nearer.”

“Yes, that is what you imagine of yourself, I know.”

“What do you mean by that, Mary?”

“I mean that is your mental picture of yourself. But you know the old saying about ‘John's John’?”

“Well”—laughing—“isn't it correct? What's *your* John,—does he differ very much from mine?”

The girls eyelids flickered together with the spasmodic action which



accompanies a sudden pang, but her lips smiled as she answered, "Very much; and I am conceited enough to think he is nearer the truth than yours."

"Well, this is interesting! Go on, won't you, and let me have my portrait 'done in oils'? What sort of a chap is your John?"

"Suppose I tell you instead what I think yours is like?"

"All right, fire ahead; I'd like to know what you think is my opinion of myself."

"Well, then,"—the girl leaned forward and stretched her clasped hands to her knee; she smiled, with a hint of amusement in the steady glance she gave him,—“John's John is a man whose attitude towards things and people is a kindly enough indifference; he considerably keeps them from seeing this attitude when possible, but he really hasn't any enthusiasm for them, don't you know? (The man flushed, but shut his lips rather doggedly over his unspoken protest.) “He is sometimes touched to the soul by sudden realizations of beauty and truth, and by aspirations towards bodying forth those revelations, but he has outgrown the childish idea that a man can change the face of the world with a garden-rake. He lets the thrills go as they come, because he knows them for a spurious article; none of the artist's divine commission has been given to him; but he isn't bitter about that, for he really doesn't care; he is utterly unambitious by nature. After the usual amount of school-boy's dreams he has found by experience that he is a mediocre personality, so he doesn't make a fool of himself by kicking up a lot of dust, trying to do something great; he just keeps cool—that is the sensible attitude for a man's mind, anyway—and thanks the stars for giving him a comfortable income, since it is so little worth while to do anything except watch the show. He is scrupulously honest and above any meanness, but he rather sneers at his virtues as a matter of taste, merely; he thinks that sort of thing consists mostly in a larger capacity for hypocrisy than the other kind of man has. John's John is singularly cold too, and unimpressionable; he is very different from most men in that! He really doesn't care much for his own family when he is away from them, and so he is sure that he is incapable of the romantic nonsense other fellows talk so much about. In a mild fashion he regrets this—— Shall I go on?”

“I guess you needn't,” with a short laugh. “That's enough to digest for one while. I say, Mary, how do you see into a fellow like that? It's beastly uncanny! I'd have been afraid to stay round if I had known your friends were quite so much an open book to you.”

“No, you are quite mistaken. That wasn't seeing into you at all. That was John's John, you remember, and it was precipitated on the ether of my consciousness”—this with a teasing little laugh.

“You don't believe in it then?”

"No!"

"Why, what part isn't true? Mary, I'm interested. If you have an antidote for the bad taste, do give it to me. If that was my John, please, what is yours?"

The girl paused as though she were questioning her courage. Then slowly a beautiful look of steadfast purpose grew in her eyes. "My John," she said, with enough pressure on the words to suppress a falter, "is a very strong man who has not found his right work yet. He is not indifferent at all; he cares intensely to do something worth while, but never having found the right channel of effort, he believes himself to be a failure; and that belief is the ever-present bitterness which he tries to hide from himself with the affectation of indifference. Yet he is tortured by an invincible, but as he thinks unjustifiable, conviction that he has something to give the world, that he is not as the mass of men. But he mocks at himself for it, because he thinks his attempts have proved the idea futile."

The man drew his breath hard and audibly, but the girl was no longer looking at him. She had taken a wild-rose from her gown, and, holding it in both hands, she sat with slightly drooping head and eyes bent dreamily on the pink petals. Her voice grew lower and yet clearer, with a vibrant earnestness as she went on. "My John is not mediocre,—he never could be. Some day he will find his work,—soon, I hope,—and it will be like finding himself. Then he will strive,—tremendously! He will put his whole soul into it, and the world will be very glad of him." The young man leaned forward with the look of one who consults a prophetess. His face was pale and eager as he interrupted her. "What will he do, Mary,—what ought he to do? Do you know that?"

The girl's rapt gravity melted in a wistful smile as she mused a moment. "I do not know," she said, "but I think it will not be art; the man has the sense of beauty and the enthusiasm for truth, but he is not exactly creative. His mind is, I think, the student-mind; and it seems to me it might be given to him to see more deeply into some vexed question than others see, and so to lift men up into clearer light." Again the man drew a hard breath, and his head straightened with a gesture of good, unconscious pride. "As for the people," the girl added, her tone changing a little, "I think—but I am not sure—that this John is not so much cold as sensitive; just because he expects such perfect communion of a friend, he dreads the jar of uncongenial companionship. Possibly he resents the acceptance of John's John as the truth by his friends, and, being always a little at cross purposes with them for taking him at his word, wraps himself up in a feeling that he isn't interested in them. I think he is too strong a man not to be able to care; I even think"—slowly—"that he is a passionate man. But perhaps the shell around his mind has shut his heart in a little,

or perhaps"—she paused—"he hasn't fallen among truly congenial people yet." The man was looking at her now, with the direct, unveiled glance of one whose secrets are no secrets to his companion. His face had something of awe in it. But the girl, meeting his eyes, shivered slightly and then laughed.

"It only remains for me to mention 'the fair woman' and 'the dark man' in order to be a regular fortune-teller," she said. "Don't you want to cross my palm with silver?"

But the man could not jest. His faith in himself gathered itself up from her faith in him till it became a giant, strong in potential good works, and his face told her what was happening. "Mary," he said at last in a moved voice, out of which every trace of indolence had vanished, "if this is true, it is what I have hoped, ever since I was old enough to hope, or dream, anything; but I haven't dared believe in—anything but 'John's John.' How did you know—what makes you believe—I have—this—better thing in me?"

The girl turned restlessly, and put one hand over her eyes and then to her forehead. The forehead was hot and the hand was like wet ice. "Oh, I am rather given to analyzing my friends," she said, a trifle unsteadily, "it amuses me. But I don't usually inform them of my secret opinions."

"I shall always be grateful that you told me," he answered, leaning forward and touching her hand with grave reverence. "I thank you—why, Mary, your hand is as cold as ice! You are tired to death. I have been very inconsiderate, boring you with my affairs like this. Why didn't you send me home?" And he rose, flushing with compunction.

A look of absolute fear sprang into the girl's eyes, a look which had lurked in their depths before, and had sent them to the clock again and again for stolen, unwilling reference. "Oh, no!" she spoke up to him with nervous lightness, "I am not at all tired. I shall be very cross with you if you make such a snippy little call to-night. There is the other train, you know?"

The man remained standing. "You *are* tired," he declared. "I ought to have seen it before. But you are always so generous,—I believe you would have let me go on indefinitely!"

"Yes, perhaps." An instant she sat looking up at him with carefully measured appeal. Then she saw that he meant to go. She stood up slowly and the brilliancy came back to her face as she rose. She smiled into his eyes. "Then, if you must go," she said, "let me wish you 'bon voyage,' and," as he held out his hand, "may it be a voyage of successful discovery!"

The young man held her hand warmly in his. A sense of pleasant relief from the vague discomfort of parting came to him from the bright, almost mocking, friendliness of her face. He was grateful to her for not making him feel worse, and his feeling gave color to the earnest-

ness of his words: "If I discover anything, I shall feel that you gave me the 'tip.' I can't tell you how I feel about your little prophecy—I sha'n't try; but I am going to try to—justify your faith in me."

"I am sure you will do that," simply; then merrily, "if the 'fair woman' makes her appearance while you are gone, send me word, and I'll use my hidden arts to circumvent the 'dark man' for you!"

"I will, Mary, and trust them too after seeing your powers. Well, I suppose it is 'good-by.' 'The best of friends,' you know——"

"I know; and even a prophet and the faithful cannot escape. Only be faithful!—and keep an eye out for the real John. Good-by, then, good-by, John's John!" And she laughed with him and at him; and his last impression, as he turned at the door for a soberer farewell, was of a warmly brilliant face, whose shining eyes and smiling mouth were but touched with the sympathetic shadow of a friendly regret.

As the outer door shut to with a click, the girl standing within the room shivered from head to foot; her bright eyes hardened to a strained gleam, and the color, as if released from the clutch of her will, fainted out of her cheeks and left them almost luminously white. She stood with head turned from the door, but straining towards it, listening. When she could no longer hear his step on the gravel-walk she shuddered again, dropping her head low. After a moment she looked around her at the empty room with wide, frightened eyes. The big chair he had sat in stood, back to her, near the sofa. Like a hypnotized person, she moved towards it slowly till she touched the carving on its top. Her hand closed over it, then passed involuntarily with a yearning, caressing pressure down the cushions till her arm enclosed the spot where his head and shoulder had rested. Her head drooped to the hard wood. Then a smothered whisper burst from her lips, "Oh, my love, my love!"

With the breaking of the silence her bodily control seemed to yield too; and suddenly she was on her knees, against and on the chair, with wide-flung arms and clutching hands clinging to it. "Oh God,—God," she choked, "help me! help me to bear it! I can't bear it unless you help me? I love him so—and he is gone. Oh, for the love you gave us,—for the love you bear us!—help me, for—for the sake—for the sake of my utter need!" And then the sound of a woman's sobbing was alone in the room.



## NATURE

AS the woven clouds of night  
 Hang in beauty o'er the moon,  
 So thy leafage veils a light  
 Fickle as a fleeting tune.

# PETER

*By Bertrand Waugh*



HOW often it happens that a critical point in life comes to us disguised as a trivial every-day incident! There is a possibility of one in a casual introduction, in each invitation we receive, in every word we exchange, yet weeks and months pass before we recognize the real importance of what has passed. So, when I saw "Peter" for the first time I failed to see that he was to punctuate an important period in my career. The one and only impression I had of him at the moment was that he was the most unremunerative return I had seen for an investment of seven shillings and sixpence in a dog license.

That, of course, was a matter that more nearly concerned Aunt Mary. I accept both Aunt Mary and her dog with the philosophical resignation that a dutiful nephew should always display.

To describe my mother's half-sister is a matter of some difficulty. In my earlier years, when she took a great interest in my scholastic progress, I had discovered in her appearance a remarkable similarity to a perfectly balanced second-grade drawing copy. This irreverent reflection I have never been able to forget, and I am reminded of it every time I see her standing with her hands loosely linked in front of her and her hair parted precisely down the centre. Her ideas have stood still for forty years while those around her have changed, so people say that she is old-fashioned and eccentric. To some of us it has been left to discover that she is both generous and sincere. Besides all this, she has money—lots of money—and a weak heart. I speak of these two things in the same breath, as it has been long customary in the family circle to do so. The possession of the money is regarded, I believe, as a species of compensation for so dangerous an affliction. Perhaps this is the correct view of it.

I pay Aunt Mary two visits annually, and twice a year, when I travel northward, do I wonder why she still lives at Withington. I can see nothing beautiful in the distant forest of chimneys that marks out Manchester, and as for weather, the place must especially tend to propagate profanity.

The particular visit I wish to speak of took place last June. I arrived on Friday to lunch, and as the cricket at Old Trafford was at an interesting stage it rained the whole day. We had a couple of hours' sunshine the next day, but Sunday was occupied in a very creditable

second edition of the Flood. So, church being an impossibility, I had to fall back on Aunt Mary's library and "Peter" for amusement.

I studied "Peter" by extending him the tips of my patent leathers to snarl at. Taking the term in its widest possibilities, one would be justified in calling him a dog. When I had seen him on the sofa for the first time I had mistaken him for a detached portion of a sheepskin rug. Aunt said he was a Yorkshire terrier or a silver terrier, I forget which, and spoke very highly of breed and other things, to all of which I assented unreservedly. He was a mass of tangled and rusty-colored hair, fifteen inches over all, and if you looked at him attentively you could distinguish through the thick, matted covering a pair of eyes and a mouth. Taking him altogether, he was a most mournful-looking object.

Aunt adored him. He had a silk-lined basket to sleep in and the choicest pieces from her plate to tempt his appetite. On his birthday and one or two other festive days of the year he was indulged with a whole tin of sardines, and, if one is to be guided by aunt's touching description of how he would afterwards lick at the empty tin, "Peter" must be regarded as an epicure of the first rank.

"Peter" disliked me. He would herald my approach with a series of convulsive wriggles, accompanied by spits, snarls, and other observations of the same order. He looked at his best when enthroned in the lap of his mistress about six inches below her crochet needles.

About once every ten minutes "Peter," aunt, and the crochet work would be mixed in one long embrace, and eloquent love phrases on the one side would call forth frantic licking from the other.

From this it may be surmised what dismay was caused by the sudden disappearance of "Peter." There were searches and tears, followed by more tears and more searches. I constructed theories and the cook enlisted the aid of her fiancé, who was a sergeant at the local police station, but neither of these things was productive. Aunt Mary turned to me for aid.

"Aunt," said I resolutely, "rely on me. I will find him."

The next morning I spent in searching the streets near St. Ann's Square. I saw no dogs like "Peter," but a man in a seedy brown overcoat offered to sell me a little pug with a very weary expression. He told me that his wife was ill, and to part with the little chap would almost break his heart. Having seen the same style of seedy man in Bond Street and Piccadilly, I declined to aid in the heart-breaking, but showed him sympathy with the aid of a two-shilling piece, and asked questions about little, fluffy dogs.

He shook his head. No, he had seen no little, silver-haired dogs at all. He wished he had. So I was obliged to resume inquiries elsewhere.

I walked on and on until at length I found myself in King Street. Drawn up in front of a big milliner's shop was a smart phaeton with yellow wheels. On the seat behind the coachman was a familiar-looking bundle of hair. I whispered a name, and a couple of ears shot up from the rest of the shapeless mass. It was "Peter"!

For a moment I paused and considered. The liveried Jehu sat as stolid as a rock, his eyes fixed on a remote something at the farther end of the street. I know not what mad impulse seized me, but I reached out my hand and patted "Peter," then, with a quick grasp, I transferred him to my arm and walked away.

I heard an exclamation behind me and, throwing dignity aside, as I had just thrown prudence, I took to my heels and shot around the first corner. My luck had deserted me. Before twenty seconds had passed I had been embraced by three policemen, my collar forcibly removed, and my silk hat trodden on. The events of the next few minutes I shall not dwell on here. I found no sympathy from the stout lady in eyeglasses and a foulard who received our procession as it returned to the phaeton, nor from the bystanders. Of the state of humiliation I was in when I reached the police station I prefer to say nothing. When I think of it at all it is an involuntary action of dreamland, and usually the result of an injudicious supper.

Ferris came at once as a result of my telegram and bailed me out.

He heard my story and rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

"We shall have to meet the lady in foulard half way, old chap," said he. "Apologies, compensation—anything, in fact, to hush it up. Eh?"

"Anything!" I murmured, thinking of Aunt Mary's probable opinion of my appearance at the police court the next day.

"Do you know the name of the lady?" asked Ferris.

I said that I thought it was Kennington, Cannington, or some such name.

"Oh! Well, Blake, I'll tell you what we'll do. I'll go and find out at the station who she is and where she lives. You go home, change your things, and turn out in your best style. Meet me at the Central Station at three o'clock sharp."

Having purchased a new silk hat, I returned at the hour named and found Ferris on good terms with himself.

"Carringtons, Blake, my boy," he cried. "Acquaintances of mine, luckily, so we are just going to drive down to Sale and call on them. You are to say nothing. I do the talking: mind you that!"

An hour later I found myself introduced to two charming young ladies—the Misses Carrington. We chatted affably—at least as affably as I could with a feeling of suspense strong on me. Ferris appeared quite at home, and we took tea.

Presently Mrs. Carrington appeared. The smile that spread over her face as Ferris introduced me suddenly faded. She had not forgotten our meeting in King Street that morning, when I confronted her hatless and without a collar.

In reply to the look of entreaty I directed at Ferris he seated himself beside Mrs. Carrington.

"My friend Blake tells me there was a slight misunderstanding in town this morning. He appears to have been sadly victimized." Ferris spoke in his most easy, airy style.

"Your new dog, 'Fluffy,' took quite a fancy to him, he tells me; in fact, he jumped out of the carriage and insisted on following him. My friend, noting with some surprise that the dog had followed him, picked him up and was about to bring him back when he was seized by an officious constable, who persisted in taking a wrong view of the case. I have known Mr. Blake for twenty years now, and all I can say is that I feel this injustice keenly. Now I ask you, Mrs. Carrington, is it likely that my friend steals dogs in the open daylight, as you were led to believe?"

The younger Miss Carrington laughed, but with the aid of her handkerchief she converted her mirth into a fair imitation of a coughing-fit. I listened to the audacity of my friend with astonishment, not unmixed with respect.

"But, Mr. Ferris, Evans says——"

"Evans, the coachman? My dear Mrs. Carrington, you do not for a moment believe a servant in a case like this. Knowing that he was responsible for 'Fluffy's' safety, and not seeing him jump out of the carriage, he made up this tale on the spot. Why, it is absurd!"

"Mrs. Carrington," said I, breaking in at what appeared to be an opportune moment, "until last Monday your dog was the property of my aunt at Withington. On that day he disappeared."

"We bought him on Tuesday afternoon in St. Ann's Square," said Miss Hilda Carrington. "A man in a brown overcoat——"

"Whose wife was ill. Yes, that man sells a lot of dogs that way." Ferris laughed.

"Fluffy" was brought in. It was an anxious moment for me when I called him by his proper name, but he wagged his two-inch tail very decidedly and there was genuine emotion in the way he licked my hand. So the ordeal came off very satisfactorily, the explanations of Ferris were accepted in their entirety, and the evidence of Evans and the police discredited.

The next day the Carringtons drove over to Withington and called on aunt. The reunion of Peter and Aunt Mary was from all accounts a most touching scene. The version of the affair that aunt believes in is that born of the innate ingenuity of Ferris. Aunt Mary is grateful



to me for the restoration of "Peter" and says that she will never forget my devotion to her. There, as far as she is concerned, the story ends. With regard to Miss Hilda Carrington it is different. I go to Manchester again shortly, but I am to stay at Sale this time—a natural outcome of an intimacy between myself and Hilda that commenced when I bought her a new dog to take the place of the surrendered "Fluffy."

From time to time she has hinted that she does not place implicit confidence in the statements of our mutual friend Ferris. One day I shall tell her the truth—but not yet, not before next winter, certainly, for our marriage is to take place next October, and it is a confession that I am in no hurry to make.



## THE WHISTLE

BY EDWIN L. SABIN

A WILLOW grew by a rippling river,  
 Lifting its head in the sun-drenched air;  
 It saw its leaves in the water quiver,  
 And knew its image was passing fair.  
 It spread its arms in petition anguished,  
 Feeling the call of a strange, sweet lyre;  
 And answering dumbly it longed and languished,  
 Strove and thrilled with a keen desire.

It yearned to sing of the blue sky over,  
 The wondrous yielding of night to day;  
 Of the silver stream, and the scent of the clover  
 Drifting from uplands far away.  
 It yearned to sing of the spring-time tender,  
 Of the message brought by the April rain;  
 When the blackbird piped in its branches slender  
 It swelled to join in the notes in vain.

Down strolled a lad to the vista golden,  
 Heart a-chime with the happy world,  
 And stirred by a sense of craftship olden,  
 Stopped where the tree its green unfurled.  
 He cut a twig with his jack-knife greedy,  
 Fashioned and trimmed it, stem and tip;  
 And the voice of the willow, wild-wood, reedy,  
 Gushed at the touch of a boyish lip!

# THE ABBOT OF BUSKIN ROCK

*By Richard Wilsted*



THEY first met in the little green horse-car, the last of its clan, that tinkled through the Back Bay district of Boston till the close of the Nineteenth Century. To ride habitually in that car was a patent of Bostonian gentility next below the taking of a daily siesta in the reading-room of the Athenæum Library.

Mrs. Eleutheria Stonard was their go-between.

"Miss Robeson, I want you to know Mr. Kevin Dwyer. One of our rising Orientalists, my dear. I thought your fields might be contiguous. A fair Sociologist, Mr. Dwyer."

Mrs. Stonard, having supplied them with labels, beamed majestically and got off the car at her whist club. She often played six rubbers a day, but found odd moments wherein to manage her husband's law business and her friends' cooks. A sense of humor, which might have detracted from her energy, had been omitted from her make-up. Miss Katharine Robeson gave Mr. Kevin Dwyer a society smile. If she had liked his looks less, she would have been pleasanter: that is the New England temperament. But her artistic sense was a healthy one. Kevin Dwyer was of middle height, spare, ruddy, and alert in manner. His hair was black and his eyes were blue—a West-of-Ireland mixture of Celt with Iberian. Being of American birth, there was nothing else of the "Old Sod" about him save his enthusiastic disposition. The girl, as his negative, naturally attracted him. She was a tall, gray-eyed blonde, with firm red lips.

"Well, she has let down the bars for us, so we might as well foregather and be joyful," he remarked.

"What bars?"

"Between our 'fields,' you know. By the way, what kind of Sociology do you chiefly cultivate?"

"Oh! I only visit a children's club at the South End."

"The South End? Why, I live there! On what street is it?"

Miss Robeson became inwardly as well as outwardly chilly. She did not care to know the South End unofficially. She named the street.

"That is in the Italian quarter. We are not so 'submerged' as that. The word is right, is it not? A submerged tenth, as compared with an upper ten."

He laughed so loudly that it jarred her. One of her ancestors had helped to pull down the Maypole at Merrymount. She changed the subject with an attempt at repartee.

"Mrs. Stonard called you a Rising Orientalist. A Setting Orientalist would be an anachronism, I suppose. What is your hobby,—Assyria or Japan?"

"Neither. I am a student of comparative religion. I am seeking Christian evidences in the classics of the Far East."

"Indeed. And have you found anything definite about Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthazar?"

"What intuition you have, Miss Robeson! You have discovered my monomania. Or did Mrs. Stonard mention it?"

"No; she has no time for details. But what fad can you find in those three old fogies. Of course, in our Church they are allegorical."

"Which means, doubtless, that you are Unitarian. Well, we take them literally in ours, and I hope they may yet prove pillars of the Faith?"

"How so?"

"You see, I am a Catholic—by birth and education, not a strayed Episcopalian. But we are by no means so confined to a groove as some Protestants imagine. We leave no stone of criticism unturned."

"Perhaps you throw them back at our glass houses."

He laughed immoderately. She thought a smile would have been tribute enough.

"Sometimes. It is nice of you to admit that there is any glass about your house."

"Why not? We need daylight, and not too much air. But what can you do with the Three Kings?"

"Beat the Agnostics' One Pair, maybe!" and with a final laugh he grasped and shook her hand, lifted his hat, and was gone. She was quite sorry that she had not asked him to call. He was different from the men she met every day. Their life orbits were immutable, and their very gestures had a certain stiffness of perspective. A week later, just as she had returned one afternoon from shopping and was about to take tea by herself, a type-printed card was brought in,—

"KEVIN DWYER, A.B."

He had not waited for an invitation. In her heart she liked him none the less, but on general principles it was well to discourage him. So, before bidding the servant show him up, she hastily resumed her hat and one glove. Dwyer wore a frock-coat and held a black wide-awake in his hand. His necktie was a manufactured bow, and his hair was a little too long behind. He came forward holding out his hand eagerly.

"I am so glad I had not gone out, Mr. Dwyer," she said calmly.

"So am I, really. I suddenly remembered that I was so rude as not to answer your question about the Three Kings—where they came from. They were Buddhists from Central Asia, and sought an Avatar in Our Lord."

"Oh! Will you have a cup of tea?"

"No, thanks—not between meals."

"Speaking of Buddha, there he is in that ebony shrine. My grandfather bought him from China. Isn't he dear?"

"He must have been dear, if his cuticle is real gold-leaf. But that is a degenerate symbol. The real Buddha—the Sage of India—was a dim forecast of the Saviour."

His manner had become fervent, his eyes flashed, and his voice rang. She feigned annoyance.

"My grandfather was a connoisseur. He would not have chosen a poor specimen."

He laughed cheerily. "No doubt. Was your grandfather an Oriental scholar?"

"He could speak pigeon English. He was a tea-merchant at Shanghai."

"I should like to visit China, but suppose I shall never have such luck."

"I have been there. It is smelly and horrid. Japan is a great deal nicer."

"You know the South End, where I live, better than I do, but I know China, where you have been, better than you do."

"Is it a part of your 'monomania'?"

"Well, yes. Buddhism is practically dead in India, but I believe that in China, which bears the same relation to the former that Christendom does to Syria, there must be still some of the pure Buddhism, some of the Faith and Practice of the Three Kings, which has been overlooked. Lamaism was thought by the Abbé Huc to be a devilish imitation of the Church. I hold that it is a smouldering fire kindled from the True Altar."

Miss Robeson concealed a yawn.

"Don't you think it would be far better to learn something about the South End, instead of dreaming about the Far East?" she suggested. "I have a lot of little girls to amuse, twice a week. Perhaps you could help me. Can you sing coon-songs or do sleight-of-hand tricks?"

"I have no accomplishments, Miss Robeson."

"But you might play 'Old Maid' with the children on rainy days, and if you would sometimes escort me to and from the club, it would be a work of at least—supererogation, do you call it?"

He chuckled. "I will come. I can tell some Irish fairy-stories that my mother taught me."

During one winter he was assiduous in his attendance upon Miss Robeson and her Children's Club. He walked with her there and back when the weather was fine. Mrs. Eleutheria Stonard finally remonstrated.

"My dear Katharine, do you know that people are talking? Of course, I presented young Dwyer to you, but I did not foresee a furious intimacy."

"How absurd! Let them talk."

"But he may be a Jesuit in disguise. They brought him up after he was orphaned. He may flirt with you merely for the sake of the small fortune with which you could directly endow Holy Church, and indirectly himself."

"Pshaw! Clergyman or cavalier, no woman could take him seriously. He can repeat tales of leprechauns and phookas that send lovely shivers down your spine, but as for his religion—he is only a Parlor Buddhist, who believes in Mahatmas and flying teacups, though he won't take tea between meals!"

Mrs. Eleutheria, in her capacity of social superintendent, promptly quoted this speech in such a way that it came with emphasis to Kevin Dwyer. He did not appear on the next occasion to escort Katharine Robeson to the South End. At first she was merely puzzled. A week elapsed, and she wrote to his address, inquiring if he were ill. There was no answer. After another week, Miss Robeson looked him up in the Directory, which confirmed the address he had given. Without hesitation she went thither on foot. The house was on a dully respectable thoroughfare, and she interviewed the landlady, a motherly Hibernian.

"Is it Misther Dwyer, Mum? Sure, he's gan to wan av thim haythin counthries. What's this it is—Chicago—Chili——"

"China?" gasped Katharine.

"'Tis roight ye are, Miss. Chiny. Poor bye, he looked that sorrowful it moight have been Purgatory."

"When did he go?"

"Noine days ago Mondah week."

"And left no word?"

"Sure, an' he did. A note fur a lady, but the name of her is unbeknown to me. There do be just the two front letters. Maybe it is yourself can tell them, dear!"

She looked slyly at Katharine. The girl turned scarlet, but did not flinch.

"K. R.," she said distinctly.

"Thrue fur ye. Sure, an' 'tis the good taste Misther Dwyer have.

No wander he wouldn't take ordhers. Ye're wurth dyin' a layman fur, darlin'!"

Miss Robeson, in bewilderment, hailed a passing herdic that she might read her note in privacy.

"DEAR MISS R.: The chance of your seeing this is a forlorn one. How could you be expected to feel much interest in a 'Parlor Buddhist' with slender prospects and antecedents? Though faithful as a convoy and amusing as a raconteur, he was a religious bore whom no woman—in your position—could take seriously. It would be, 'Jesuitical casuistry' to remind you that he never asked you to take him: he was morally certain to ask you sooner or later. He could not, in this country and epoch, play Chastelard to your Queen Mary. But there was a Queen Kate who said 'Hist!' when her page sang his hopeless love-song. For him there was a sea to cross and a world to win.

"K. D."

It was magnificently silly, and she had never contemplated such an episode. Her environment had been one where enthusiasm was too thoroughly mental for translation into action. The men of her set were correct to an uninteresting degree. They would have dubbed him a "Mucker."

Katharine took up her tasks again in rather a mechanical way, and confronted Mrs. Stonard with an unruffled demeanor. But that mighty woman saw that there was something wrong, and thought it her duty to find a suitable match for the girl who was beginning to snub Boston men so severely that they avoided her. Calpurnius P. McGlew came East to sell copper and "round-up" a wife. He had graduated from the Wheat Pit of Chicago and at thirty was a millionaire. His fellows called him "Scalper." He met Mrs. Stonard, and their mutual respect was great,—his for the Empress Dowager of Fashion and hers for the King of Speculation. He asked her to "put him up to a good thing in brides. Would rather have high tone than rocks." Mrs. Stonard introduced him to Miss Robeson at a ball. He promptly decided—as he wrote his partner—"to buy up the concern and run it." But it was a long and arduous campaign. He spent money and time freely, was even eloquent in his way. Two years after the disappearance of Kevin Dwyer Katharine suddenly capitulated. She had been deemed impregnable by Mrs. Stonard, a Demetrius Poliorcetes in petticoats. The following telegram was despatched by Calpurnius to his partner,—

"Kitty Glewed."

The other girls did not acknowledge his fascination. He was short, stout, prematurely bald, and he smoked to excess. His ethics, manners, and language were those of the stock market. His sisters had married their equals at too early a period for his purse-pride. He hinted to

Katharine that she might "ring off the folks." She refused, and was kind to the poor women whose fraternal glories were so dazzling. When McGlew was out of town on business their children were often invited to his house on the Lake Front, and grew to love their aunt as much as they feared their uncle. He called them "brats with no bringing up," and publicly grumbled that he had none of his own. If this were a grief to his wife, she did not show it, and she never nagged at him. After five years of marriage a prolonged panic in the market brought Calpurnius to the verge of ruin. By unremitting work and watchfulness he saved the bulk of his wealth at the expense of his health. The doctors gave his ailment a learned and expensive name and prescribed foreign and unlimited travel. In the company of his wife, his least compromising niece, a physician, valet, and lady's maid, he started to girdle the globe, via San Francisco. His condition was pitiful, memory and nerves no longer responding to the will. He took a childish delight in the flower-wreaths of Honolulu and the man-gigs of Japan. Occasionally a flash of the old insight would startle his friends.

Once on the steamer he said to his wife:

"Kitty, why did you come down off your pedestal to marry me? Do you think I am fool enough to believe you loved me? No. Your heart was broken, Kitty, before ever I sighted you. It is none of my business, Kitty, but I won't hinder you long." Here he became maudlin and shed tears.

It was thought that a trip up the Yang-tse in the clear Chinese autumn might amuse the invalid. Near the entrance to the Po-yang Lake the river steamer grounded on a new shoal and was delayed for a day. The fine scenery of Kiang-si province afforded some compensation. On the south the Lu-shan range rose quite abruptly between the lake and river, and several picturesque islands jutted from the waters, among them the temple-crowned Buskin Rock. This isle was shaped like a Chinese military boot, whence its name. Among the passengers was Mr. Robert Broughton, a young English tea-taster, who proposed a trip to Buskin Rock in one of the ship's boats. The idea roused McGlew from his lethargy, and the whole party, together with the chief officer and a quartermaster, went ashore, taking an ample tiffin. They climbed the rock-hewn stairway leading to the lower story of the whitewashed Buddhist monastery, and were there met by a chubby, bright-eyed novice of eighteen, who conducted them to the main courtyard of the buildings. The temple was outwardly like a thousand others which are scattered over the most commanding eminences of the Celestial Empire, but within it lacked the dingy gaudiness common to Chinese joss-houses. There were few images, and those few neither tawdry nor grotesque. Three gilt Buddhas—the Saviours of the Past, Present, and Future—had a grand and benignant air. The bronze altar

vessels were ancient and artistic; the embroidered hangings of the sanctuary were rich and fresh. The whole place was clear, and sweet from vases of jasmine. A number of monks, gathered in the enclosure, greeted the strangers in the native style. Their faces were not of the stupid or criminal type so often found among bonzes. One of them handed the doctor a slip of red paper, whereon was written, or rather painted, in English the following exhortation:

"Truth is a moon reflected in many wells. The Abbot of Buskin Rock requests the visitors from the West, who are welcome, to respect and conform to the usages of this Temple."

"Deuced odd," observed Broughton. "Never heard that tourists visited Buskin Rock."

"Ask if we may pay our respects to his Reverence," suggested Katharine.

Broughton in his fragmentary Chinese succeeded in conveying the message, but they were informed that the Abbot was in contemplation and could not be disturbed. But they were shown over the monastery and invited to use as a luncheon-room a large chamber overlooking the lake. The splendid view gave them great appetites, and McGlew seemed to have taken a new lease of life. He raised his champagne glass to his lips with a fairly steady hand and cried:

"Here's to the Abbot of Buskin Rock!  
Sound be his sleep and long his life;  
And a wealthy widow be his wife!"

In a few minutes the novice entered the room with another piece of red paper whereon was written:

"This apartment is known as the Wishing Chamber. Desires uttered here by a person in the shadow of Death are said to come true.

"THE ABBOT OF BUSKIN ROCK."

There was a roar of laughter—suddenly checked—as this was read aloud. "The Abbot is certainly up-to-date," remarked the Doctor dryly. "He keeps leaflets for the edification of visiting unbelievers."

Broughton shook his head. "I can't make it out. Perhaps he was formerly in foreign employ at Shanghai. Their priesthood is recruited from all sorts and conditions."

Tiffin being over, the visitors withdrew, after vainly renewing their attempt to interview the head of the monastery. On the following day their journey was resumed without incident until the return to Shanghai, when a Chinese sailor handed to Katharine a third slip of red paper:



"The Abbot of Buskin Rock sends his blessing after you, and hopes that you may now believe Buddhism to be something more than a Parlor Religion."

For some reason she kept this benediction to herself. Her husband's health steadily failed after leaving China. He crossed the Atlantic only to die in his palace on the shore of Lake Michigan. The newspapers extolled him as an example for young men until his will was filed for probate, when they termed him a monopolist. Katharine, his sole heiress, made such amends as she thought right, endowing public institutions with what was legally due her as a widow and giving the rest to the dead man's kindred. Her own means were ample for her wants. She spent her winters in Chicago and her summers in New England. During the World's Fair of 1893 she entertained a score of Bostonians, including Mr. and Mrs. Eleutheria Stonard. Among the numerous side-shows of the great exhibition there was one called the Congress of Religions. Whether it was a representative body is questionable, but it was quaint. There were exponents of every creed wherein man has attempted to cage his Creator. Some of them enjoyed the hospitality of Mrs. McGlew. The Archimandrite Apameibomenos took the hostess in to dinner. The Moollah Moodlakhi accompanied, but would not give his arm to Mrs. Stonard. Shakyadada, a Buddhist from Ceylon, escorted Miss Hoyt, niece of the late Calpurnius. Apameibomenos ate and drank everything. Moodlakhi would only take black coffee out of a cup which he brought with him, and Shakyadada fasted completely. But he was affable and told Miss Hoyt, in his broken English, that he had an American co-religionist from China in town.

"Oh!" cried Miss Hoyt, who was a Ritualist, "does he wear a mauve cassock like the priests at Buskin Rock?"

"He Abbot. Weah gentlyman cloth. Name Doowyah."

Katherine McGlew caught this. After dinner she took the Cingalese aside and obtained from the swarthy little man everything he knew about the Abbot, to whom also he was made the bearer of a letter:

"DEAR MR. DWYER—or must it be VERY REVEREND? Will you not 'come over and help us Macedonians' on Wednesday next at five P.M.? I expect some friends, who would be very glad to hear about the Real Buddhism. I can also give you a cup of tea—if you have learned to drink it between meals—from the neighborhood of Buskin Rock.

"Sincerely your friend,

"KATHARINE ROBESON MCGLEW.

"P.S.—If you come at four o'clock I shall be alone.

"K. R. MCG."

He did not reply, but he came—at the earlier hour. He was stouter than of yore, the lines of his face were deeper, and the hair at his

temples was turning gray, but his eyes were as keen as ever. He wore the armor of civilization; there was nothing "mauve" about him. Katharine held out both hands, and he took them.

"We are ten years older," was her greeting.

"Are we? I do not feel so, nor do you look so."

"I hardly believed that your eminence would condescend to be a 'Parlor Buddhist' again."

"Let us not sneer until we understand. I am neither Eminence nor Reverence. I was a lay Abbot. I am now only a Man in the World."

She looked relieved, but spoke with sarcasm.

"Oh! Rather a crowded profession, is it not?"

"There is room for me. And you—what is your field now—whist, slums, or the heathen?"

"Widowhood. You have no idea what a busy sphere it is, with privileges and functions allotted to no other state in life."

"Please specify."

"I am the repository of numerous love secrets. I enjoy men's friendships without women's frowns. I can give away my surplus without robbing posterity. And you, my friend, have you found it a finer and a nobler thing to play Chastelard to a church instead of to a woman?"

He sprang forward, and they silently gazed at each other for half a minute.

"Then—you took my letter?" he murmured in a low tone. She smiled.

"Was it not mine by right? What other K. R. did you know? And I have it still, together with your apostolic benediction!"

Kevin Dwyer seized her hand and kissed it.

"Kate, have I been an utter fool?"

"Not an utter fool. Even I must admit some folly."

"Even you? Only you can fathom it. But is it too late for me to make amends?"

"Amends? Am I your ghostly confessor, Lord Abbot of Buskin Rock?"

"I have no other. Will you not grant me a plenary indulgence?"

"What have you done to deserve it?"

"Little enough, perhaps. I shipped before the mast and sought the Orient, not to dream but to work. I got closer to the people than any missionary of this generation. I learned their language, and taking what spiritual furniture they had, I repaired and purified it. Was I a hypocrite? I knew their religion better than they, and I professed nothing which I did not believe. There are as many rays in the Light of Asia as in the Light of the World, though they have not the same penetration. Buskin Rock was a den of debauchees and an

asylum for outlaws when I came there. I made it what a European monastery used to be during the Dark Ages,—a refuge for research and a centre of education. Now it is the pride of a province and the point of pilgrimage for multitudes.”

“Do you remember the Wishing Chamber of your Temple? Was it really a miraculous spot?”

“Perhaps. As the Chinese poet has written:

“‘Who feels the subtle finger-touch of Fate  
Crossing our hopes when they are most elate,  
Or smoothing out the tangles of a skein  
We fain had sever’d, as quite desperate!’”

The rumble of a carriage was heard. She arose and went to the window, where Kevin joined her. Mrs. Eleutheria Stonard was helping her husband to alight.

“Is your love dead at the last moment?” whispered Dwyer.

“No. But if it were, I should still have to fulfil a prophecy. Is there room at Buskin Rock for a lay Abbess?”

Whatever he answered, they did not return to China, but remained in the Windy City, where he produced his wonderful book entitled “The Three Kings.” And Mrs. Eleutheria Stonard claims the match as of her making.



## “AT HAMPSTEAD IN 1818”

(KEATS, SHELLEY, AND LEIGH HUNT)

BY R. E. LEE GIBSON

DOWN that dim street that then was Hampstead Lane,  
Like common men, they went upon their way,  
Three poet friends, who on a summer’s day  
Loved there to ramble over knoll and plain,  
And hear, perhaps, the skylark’s mellow strain,  
The plover’s note; or pluck, perhaps, a spray  
Of humble bloom, whereon the dew still lay,—  
Pure, simple joys, for which their hearts were fain.  
Yet were they destined for renown, these three;  
Though one met death, despairing of his bays;  
And one died young, a victim of the sea;  
And one toiled out the Psalmist’s span of days.  
Their songs are shrined within the hearts of men;  
Time has made towers of their fame since then.

# I LOVE MY LOVE SO WELL

(OLD SONG)

*By S. S. F. Callahan*



MAY 20.

**M**Y DEAR: It seems as though I cannot wait another day to hear from you! Are you having so good a time you have forgotten? No; I know that is not so. You are busy? Yes, I know. You are ill? God forbid! I shall not let myself think that.

I dreamed of you last night again. I wonder why dreams always stop? Are we awake and truly alive in dreams, and are we asleep now and merely the actors in the dreams of some great superior being? That was always my wonder when a child.

I have been reading about Brahms and Clara Schumann. Their friendship was as much to them as—— How curious to forget the end of a sentence! Can you finish it?

Q.

—  
MAY 25.

DEAR: Your satisfying letter came the very day I was so impatient, and it is before me now. The spirit it breathes (I wonder if you knew) is the spirit of Youth, with a capital!—fearing nothing, hoping and believing the All. “All,” and I hear you laugh and give a scornful sniff as you read that and think to yourself you are sceptical or agnostic (does it please you better?) and quite fin de siècle!

Ah, Jean, don’t misunderstand me. I mean that there is no “Fail” in your lexicon, any more than in that of the wretched “Youth” whom I have always hated as I do the “Excelsior” fellow, who richly deserved his fate, I think.

And so the stunt is nearly done, and you are going home in a few days to claim your reward of being lazy before you begin your real tussle with the devils of disease and sin and sorrow.

Ancestral halls are pretty good things, nicht wahr? And the Cousin,—will she be there all the time? Will you ride and drive much?

Tell me more of her. I know she is petite, brunette, with eyes that hold lights and shadows, and hair with glints of red. But the girl herself—the real Eloise, what is she? Tell me.

And now the bells are ringing and I must say "Good day" to you, dear friend, dear friend.

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JUNE 1.

How glad I was, dear Jean, to hear of your "happy day." That sail and the supper on the beach were indeed lovely. Do you remember *our* clam-bake? That was three years ago, and it is still red-letter, isn't it? There were Kate—sweet sixteen—and Grandma Grünewald, so afraid of rheumatism, but insisting on staying; Miss Bell, and Henry Hopkins in her wake with his immaculate white ducks! And there was "Cap'n Bills," with his rough, old beard sticking out like a halo around his full-moon face as he fed the fire and bossed the crowd. And then—and then the moon-lit beach, and the walk up to the old wreck, and the very high tide, and all those jelly-fish glittering on the dark sand; and the far-off tinkle of the guitar against the boom of the surf, and we alone down on the beach! And over it all that wonderful aurora! Oh dear Jean,—that faint color which deepened and broadened and flamed up to and beyond the zenith! And when it had all died out of the sky you told me of your aim in life. The three years are gone, and they have brought only good for you. You are ready for your work, with enthusiasm and health and knowledge for stock in trade; and I believe in the work and in you, Jean. I believe you will make the particular spot in which you live better because *you are*.

Now, isn't that nice? And it isn't a preachment at all; for it is just common-sense, and common—no, *uncommon*—friendship.

Q.

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JUNE 10.

Somehow the days go slowly; but they are, I think, worth while. My work is taking shape satisfactorily, and when one is busy mentally one's thoughts cannot be truant. As the dear old Doctor used to say, "You cannot conjugate *être* and at the same time think how abused you are by Fate."

The little note was not quite *you*. What is Eloise doing that bothers, or is it simply a reaction from the strain of the past few months?

Disco is more a friend than I ever believed a dog could be. You were a dear to send him. He knows he belongs to me, and loves me.

Do you know Arnold's poem, "Self-Dependence"? It is fine, but its ideal seems so unattainable! I don't believe I shall ever be self-sufficient enough—and—— Disco is a great comfort!

I am doing Ruskin this summer. He speaks somewhere of "The weariness of vain desires; the pitiful, unconquerable, coiling and re-

coiling and self-involved returns of some sickening famine and thirst of heart." Poor man! He drank to its dregs the cup of renunciation. I wonder if the hurt ever stopped.

Bon jour, mon ami.

JUNE 15.

DEAR MR. MAN: So you "feel old" because the birthday is so near? Cheer up, Jean, dear; "The worst is yet to be:" you will be forty—yea, even seventy—some day!

And so I'll see you just twenty-one days from next Sunday! Ah, do you think calendars know anything? I hope they don't feel, for I scratch off a day without compunction each morning (in the morning, because when I'm fairly launched on the day it's nearly gone; see?). And once when I was up till after midnight I did the deed then; but that didn't pay, for the hours seemed longer afterwards.

You know you may tell me anything. Why do you hesitate? Haven't I been Mother Confessor many times, and did I ever fail to understand? You are dreadfully restless. What's the trouble, Jean?

Disco has learned to sit up and to say his prayers and says "Thank you" and "If you please." He knows your picture, I am confident.

Shall you come in the morning or at night?

Happy day to you, mon cher Jean.

JUNE 20.

That last letter was a very brilliant effort, my dear Mr. Jean Coudert. You were so evidently having a good time, it shone out of every sentence. You must be in fine shape to "mow away three loads of hay, swim a mile, and dance all night" all on one day! It is good to hear.

The picture is so pretty, but how tantalizing! Why didn't you give me her profile, at least? Does she row and swim too? An all-around sort of a girl, I should fancy.

You seem to have settled into a very peaceful condition, you two belligerents. Did you cry quits, or were honors easy? I could have told you long ago she doesn't care for Dick. So you see if you had 'fessed up sooner, you would have been easier in your mind sooner! I think, however, you rather underrate Dick's value. He is a pretty good sort if not brilliant, and he worships the ground she walks on, and that's to his credit, isn't it?

As ever,

Q.

P.S.—A luncheon at the University Club is on to-morrow. I shall stay in town a few days. Adieu.

JUNE 22.

MY DEAR JEAN: Such a lovely day! Bright and crisp and sunny; altogether one to make the blood tingle and the love of living grow strong. We are going over to Little Bear Cañon, two on horseback and four in a carriage: take steaks to broil on the rocks and stay till the moon rises.

We wished last night, when we were walking up the hill beyond Green Rock, your party could join us.

I am called away. À demain.

P.S.—Two hours later. It was a stupid caller!

P.S. No. 2.—The clubhouse luncheon was a great success. Good things to eat, and any number of bright stories. I came home, you see; for I didn't want to miss the picnic! 'Bye.

Q.

JULY 4.

And the Bird of Freedom is screeching from the mouths of thousands of nasty little and big fire-crackers; and more'n a million toy pistols, torpedoes, and—and—oh! fill up the list of nerve-tearing, temper-wearing explosives!

It has been a long time, I acknowledge, since I was interrupted and said I'd write "to-morrow." Well, some "to-morrows" never come, you know; but mine does, only a little late!

The picnic? 'Twas a good time from start to finish. I had Buck and he was in fine condition, and my new habit is becoming to me and to him. We left at three and reached the Cañon in good supper-time, and everything did taste so good! The Major is a capital cook, you know, and the steaks were rare and juicy, and the coffee strong and hot. Afterwards some of us crawled down to the bed of the creek, and it was as bad as we suspected the day we didn't try it, you remember.

Then the climb up, and the waiting for the moon. It was pretty dark and cold and altogether weird before it rose. The fire flickered and snapped and died away, throwing its reflections now up on Castle Rock, now upon us, when one or another would be brought out in sharp relief for an instant and then left in shadow again. You do not need to be told how the whole heaven seemed to throb and glow as the hour approached, and yet I like to say it over. How the light centralized and focussed at that one spot on the horizon just opposite our Cañon, and how the mystery deepened and hushed us all, until the great, golden ball, "slowly as majesty moves," rose before us. It was more than beautiful: it was awe-ful!

We were home at midnight and ended up with a rarebit.

I was very tired and lazy the next day: and then the Major's

friends came, and we drove to Gold Hill and Ward and home by Jimtown one day; and to White Rocks another; and played golf and whist; and so on ad infinitum.

Those men were nice fellows, and they seemed to like *me*, which was curiously pleasant! And now I think I have written a tome, and I am sure you will excuse my delay in answering your two letters. As ever,

Q.

JULY 7.

Why, my dear Jean, how perfectly absurd! Of course, I had no reason to keep from you the name of my escort. I went with the Major himself.

You will be starting soon on your canoe trip? I am very sure you miss Eloise, and you will be glad when she returns. It is fine to be able to play as she does.

We shall be sorry not to see you until October, but no doubt the longer rest will do you worlds of good. Very tiredly,

Q.

JULY 12.

MY DEAR JEAN: I have given no one the right, I believe, to criticize me quite so sharply as you seem to feel your privilege. The Major is my good friend, and has been very kind to me. I certainly shall not be rude to him. I think, under the circumstances, we would better drop the subject.

I am always very sincerely your friend,

ELIZABETH M. SAXTON.

JOURNAL OF E. M. S.

*July 17.*—Another day, and no letter written, and just Pride to bully me into maintaining my proper self-respect! I'd like to throw convention to the winds, you know, you dear thing that won't talk back, and tell him I long to see him, and that I love him, love him to desperation, and that I am more than fifty little sillies like that Eloise; but I won't!

And now the Pater smiles on the Major, and the Major smiles on me; and where is the end?

*July 21.*—A new thought is striving to be heard and to make me its slave. It begins with "Ought" and ends with "Must." I am wild with the pain of it all.

A long talk with the Dominie, best of men. He will help me if he can. He says, but, oh, so kindly, I can't put it in words, that I would be in danger of wronging *him, my Jean*, if—if—

*July 27.*—Days and weeks are one blur. The Pater, the Dear One, and the Dominie are for the Major, and most delicately and honorably



he acts. He is willing to wait for my love, and he is singularly patient with my vacillation.

*July 30, midnight.*—Never for one instant do I want him to feel fear, my Jean,—fear of the outer, fear of the inner! “Ghastly” is a mild and tender adjective to apply to the grisly monster.

It is all over now: I have yielded to the Pater and Dear One. I shall make him happy, and I shall be a loyal, faithful wife. There was no reasonable excuse. I could not say he is not in every way suitable. Kind, generous, educated, wealthy, proper age,—all eminently correct. And I put it out of my own power to do you a harm, my Jean! Just for a little it will seem hard to you too, I know. -

I fought against Fate. I tried to believe that the young love was for me, but how could the gap of years be bridged? This very summer’s experience strikes a warning not to be scorned.

It was not easy to accept, though. There were days of uncertainty. I tried to pray the little prayer every night as I watched our star. But last night I could not, and I took Disco and went way up to Lone Pine and sat there.

It was the kind of night we have so often driven out on the Valley Road: the sky blue, myriads of stars, the plains soft silver, and the mountains black, black as my heart’s despair. The fight had to be won or lost, and we had it out, I and myself. Who won? Tell me, dear Journal. I only know that after hours of fierce struggle and agony, of trying to see the right (I am afraid it was *my* right), suddenly the whole thing stopped. The pain was still. I could even hum a little song, and just a blessed peace fell on me. Since then I have been quiet—quiet. Numb, perhaps; but though the peace may be simply from the absence of feeling, it is none the less blessed. And when the Major to-day quite simply asked me to be his wife, I told him I would.

*August 14.*—Five weeks since I wrote him, and to-day comes a little note, so hurt and so penitent. He is coming home,—and on my finger is the Major’s ring and I am to be married in five days!

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AUGUST 14.

MY DEAR JEAN: Sorry to miss you. We leave for the Exposition and Canada on Monday. Very hastily,

E. M. S.

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[DESPATCH.]

AUGUST 17.

*Jean Coudert to Miss Elizabeth M. Saxton.*

I reach Buffalo Tuesday. Wire name of hotel.

JEAN.

[DESPATCH.]

AUGUST 17.

*Elizabeth M. Saxton to Jean Coudert.*

Plans changed. The Major called to California. Will write.

ELIZABETH M. SAXTON.

—

AUGUST 17.

MY DEAR JEAN: I am to be married on Monday; and though I shall not see you this summer, and as I am to live in New York it will not be probable we can often meet, our friendship must not be broken.

The Major bids me say to you our house shall be yours whenever you are in town.

I think you must know, my dear friend, how very much your success and happiness mean to me, and that a very deep wish of my heart is for your good in every line. I could wish to be a wizard, foretelling only happy days to you and yours.

We shall forget the misunderstandings and see the answer to our questionings some day.

Till then, good faith, good heart, good fortune!

Once more the old signature,

Q.



## IN QUARANTINE

BY CORA A. MATSON DOLSON

NONE shall go out, and none come in," said they,  
And nailed the dreaded mandate o'er our door;  
Through many a night and many a weary day,  
Alone, our hearts the drearsome vigil bore.

Then one, white-robed, stole past the guarding line,  
Heedless of staying locks or stern command;  
Stood by the couch that held this loved of mine,  
And on his forehead laid a cooling hand.

Touched were the tired lids by poppies white,  
A smile of peace drew o'er the features thin;  
The door swung backward to the darkened night,  
And two went out, where only one came in.

# THE SEATONS' MASQUERADE

*By Florence Kingston Hoffman*



MRS. TOM SEATON felt utterly disgusted. For, as if it were not quite bad enough that Madame Léonie's costume should prove a horrible disappointment coupled with a most outrageous bill, Tom must needs develop a bad attack of gout just when she had counted on his spending the evening, as usual, with a few congenial spirits at the club.

Altogether it looked as though the well-laid plan might topple down like a veritable house of cards, and somehow—as Mrs. Tom warmed her pretty feet at the dressing-room fire—it, the plan, didn't seem half so enticing and sprightly as when Mrs. Burke-Weston had unfolded it some days before.

"We'll go to the French ball," that lively lady had declared. "Arthur has promised for years to take me, and being my brother will make it perfectly proper. Mr. Chetwood says he will be only too enchanted to go with you (you know how fearfully épris he is), so we shall make a nice little *partie-carrée*, and if we leave at twelve we shall be quite respectable and all that, and Arthur has promised to give us some supper at his rooms afterwards, which will be just the right ending for a nice little frolic. As for our two dear old husbands, Weston always goes to the club immediately after dinner and couldn't be hired to join us in any case, and I fancy Mr. Seaton is a bit like him,—so we won't say a word to either of them until the day after, when they couldn't raise any objections even if they wanted to."

How innocent and simple it had all sounded; but now Tom's gout seemed likely to prove an insurmountable barrier, for, of course, going to the club would be out of the question. It seemed horrid to desert him, and how could she invent a plausible excuse? For way down in the depths of Kitty's soul something was making itself heard which caused her to doubt seriously whether dear old Tom, for all his indulgent, easy-going ways, might not violently object if he got even a glimmer of the truth.

Altogether she felt strongly tempted to send a note to Maude Burke-Weston and give the whole thing up. She even dipped into her silver inkstand and prepared to write, when the thought of how Maude

would rage and then—far worse—laugh at her stayed her hand. No! it was out of the question; she simply couldn't live through it, remembering how Maude only the day before had told her she was "so provincial."

When the Seatons had lived at Glenside, before they moved to New York and Tom had made his pile in Wall Street, life had often seemed horribly dull to pretty Kitty, and though she fondly loved Tom and dear little Marjorie, she sometimes longed with an intensity that amounted to positive pain for a real fling—to go to New York for a few years at least, and be what Tom laughingly termed "in the procession instead of watching it from the sidewalk." But now that they were actually there, that people were beginning to speak of Tom as a rich man, and that they were fairly launched in the giddy whirl, Kitty occasionally reflected that though those old days at Glenside were undeniably dull, they had been very restful—and as she fretfully ruffled the little curls above her aching forehead she remembered, with a sigh, that before they came to New York headaches had been an unknown quantity to her.

The little clock on the dressing-table chimed six times,—Marjorie's bedtime,—so she went up to the nursery where the little girl was being undressed, and stayed a while after nurse had tucked her charge into the pretty brass cot.

"Mummie, dear," said Marjorie, as she laid her curly head lovingly on Kitty's shoulder, "are you going out to-night?"

"Yes, dear," said Kitty faintly, wishing she might say no.

"And Daddy, is he going too? But no, he can't with his poor foots, and he'll be all alone, won't he?"

"Yes, dear," said Kitty again, with another twinge.

Marjorie never noticed her mother's abstraction, but rattled on: "Nannie Weston and I had 'most a quarrel in the Park to-day, mummie, 'cause she said her papa was the bestest man in the whole world, and I said he wasn't, 'cause my papa was, and there couldn't be two. And then she got mad and slapped my Bully Boy, and I wonder he didn't bite her, and then I slapped her and she cried. But we made it up again and I kissed her and said I was dreadfully sorry, and I was; but all the same my papa is the bestest man, isn't he, mummie? and we think he is, don't we, lovey?"

And when Kitty agreed with her as to the truth of this and tucked her up again, the child nestled into the soft pillows murmuring sleepily, "course my papa's the bestest—the idea!"

Then Mrs. Seaton left the nursery with a rather heavy heart, for anything like deception came very hard to her.

She tapped gently at her husband's door, and on entering found Tom in a big chair by the fire, with the afflicted member swathed in

cotton batting and bandaged in black silk mufflers, till it looked like a miniature catafalque.

"Tom, dear," said Kitty softly, "aren't you going to try and hobble down to dinner? It's so forlorn to have it up here."

"Oh, yes, indeed!" he replied, drawing his wife affectionately down to a seat on his chair-arm, while he lovingly fondled the little curls that were beginning to break bounds all over her pretty head. "I've grown quite expert in skipping and sliding round on one leg, you know, and after dinner I might make an effort to beat you at piquet—it'll be quite an agreeable change from the endless 'Sniff' and 'Bridge' at the club."

Kitty choked a little as she tried to steady her voice, and with her face, which she felt sure looked guilty, turned away from Tom she said:

"I'm so sorry, dear, but you see I didn't know you were going to be at home to-night, and I've made an engagement to meet Maude Weston at the Sorosis Club. I wish I didn't have to go, but I really can't get out of it."

If Tom noticed anything unusual in his wife's manner, his face certainly didn't show it as he said,—

"Couldn't you telephone?"

But Kitty made some rather lame excuse and then hurried off to dress for dinner.

It was an unusually silent meal that evening, for Kitty wasn't happy in her mind and, try as she would, couldn't appear at ease. Tom too hadn't a great deal to say for himself, but Kitty put that down to gout.

Both felt relieved when dinner was over, and soon afterwards Kitty slipped away to her room, where, without the assistance of her maid, she put on a ball-dress with guilty haste, and then, rolling the black domino with its pink trimmings and the heavy black lace mask into a little bundle, she muffled herself in her furred wrap and ran down-stairs, calling "good-night" to Tom as she passed the library door without going into the room.

Tom, who had been hoping she would look in on him for a few minutes, sighed a little from the depths of the big chair,—and then, as the carriage-door slammed and the sound of wheels on the asphalt proclaimed Kitty's departure, a most extraordinary thing happened.

Tom sat up straight, listened intently, and as no sound save the murmur of voices in the servants' hall beneath him broke the stillness, he skipped out of his chair, bandaged foot and all, and ran quietly upstairs with all the activity of a four-year-old.

Once intrenched in the safety of his own room, he rapidly stripped

off bandages and batting and began to collect his dress clothes, while he reviewed his plan of action, and reflected on the disclosures of that same day.

He had discovered Kitty's little plan in the most innocent way imaginable while down town that morning, for when going over some papers hastily collected before starting for the office, a little undressed note had dropped out. Thinking it merely an invitation, Tom had glanced at it, and then, a few words catching his eye, he deliberately read it right straight through, though it began "My dearest Kitty," and, generally speaking, Tom Seaton was, in things both large and small, the soul of honor.

He read it through a second time, and then, going to the small closet in the corner, gulped down the contents of a hastily filled glass,—for when stocks were panicky he occasionally indulged in what he called a regular "ticker" headache, and nothing, he was wont to say, steadied him like a B. and S.

This accomplished, he came back to his desk, read the note a third time, and then sat still to think it over. He had always detested Maude Weston, as well as her good-for-nothing brother, and had tried gently to wean Kitty from the intimacy, but such a thing as this had never crossed his mind. And Chetwood too, whose broker he had been for years! Not that he doubted Kitty for an instant, nor her love, which he knew to be stanch right through, but it seemed such a shabby trick to play on a fellow, to take a man's wife, even with other people, to such a place on the quiet. Still, no solution of the matter so discovered came to him; and just here his reflections were broken in upon by the office boy, who tapped on the door and announced "Mr. Chetwood, sir." So Tom crushed the little note in his pocket and rose to meet his visitor.

Graham Chetwood shook hands with his usual cordiality, though Tom fancied he avoided *his* eyes, and then broke out:

"Look here, Tom, old man, I'm in a devil of a mess. What's your opinion of P., L. and W.?"

"Just what it's always been," Tom replied, "rotten as punk. You know I've always warned you against it, and wouldn't handle it myself for a gold mine. So why do you ask?"

"Well, the fact is," Chetwood continued rather sheepishly, "I've been dealing direct with some of those Chicago fellows, who persuaded me I couldn't fail to win a pile, and now I'm in pretty heavily and the damned thing has begun to fluctuate, and I don't know what to do, for I don't want to get that ring down on me. What do you advise?"

"Wire them to hold their horses as far as you are concerned, then

take the first train for Chicago, see your friends personally, and get rid of every share P. D. Q.," said Tom quickly, knowing his advice to be sound, and, moreover, revolving a sudden idea in his head. "The 'Empire State' goes out at ten. Take my tip and don't let her go without you.

"By the way, to change the subject," he went on, "ever been to the F. B.—French Ball, I mean? Some fellows want me to go, and I would if I could get a rig, but I'm such a devilish tall chap I don't believe I could in a hurry."

Chetwood shot a sudden glance at him, but Tom was bending over the desk, and when he did raise his head his face was as unruffled as a bowl of milk.

Chetwood hesitated for the fraction of a second, and then, because he too saw the solution of a problem that had suddenly grown most distasteful to him, said, with a slight cough:

"Why, the fact is, old man, I've got a whole Mephistopheles outfit,—had it for years, don't you know,—and I don't believe there's an inch difference between you and me: sure you could wear it as easy as rolling off a log. Like to have it? If so, I'll send it over by my man. All right, old fellow, wish you joy and pray for me, for I'm off to Chicago," and, still without catching Tom's eye, he hurried away.

Tom by this time had got into his clothes and was jamming the Satanic grandeur into a dress-suit case. "I'll change at my office," he said to himself, "and meet them at the dressing-room door at ten, just as the note arranged."

Then, listening for a possible footstep, honest Tom Seaton stole down his own stairs with the air of a detected felon, got into his top coat, and quietly let himself out.

Ough! how he hated it all, but dear little Kitty must have a lesson—God bless her! She would be in good hands, and he'd make it all right with her afterwards; and then he thought of the tickets actually bought and paid for, which secured passage for four on the Etruria one week from date. Kitty had been teasing for months to go; it would be a joyful surprise. "And when we get back," Tom whispered grimly to himself, wondering why his eyes seemed sort of misty, "I guess Maude Burke-Weston will have to look out for another friend."

And now to return to Kitty.

She drove to the Sorosis Club and dismissed the carriage. Then, having slipped on her domino in one of the dressing-rooms, and concealed this with her long wrap, she stepped into the cab that she had ordered and drove off to the ball, all blissfully unconscious that just ten minutes after her departure from home a messenger-boy had delivered there a hastily scribbled note from Maude Weston, beginning:

"DEAREST KITTY: The game is up! Weston has found out and behaved like a perfect pig. So we can't go, and my heart is broken. I am sending this in time to stop you.

"Your agonized,

"MAUDE B. W."

And alas! alas! for "the best laid plans o' mice and men," this same daintily perfumed note was now reposing on Kitty's own little desk, there to await her return!

She felt horribly frightened when she got out at Madison Square Garden, and still more so when she didn't find Maude, in domino exactly like her own, awaiting her. After twenty minutes had passed she grew desperate, and secure in the shelter of her heavy mask, she went to the door to reconnoitre. There was no sign of Maude, but with a gasp of relief she recognized Mephistopheles in black and red; for though there might easily have been dozens in like costume, there was no mistaking Graham Chetwood's tremendous height and broad shoulders.

He came towards her at once and extended his arm.

"Mr. Chetwood?" she said, as she took it somewhat timidly, and he reassured her at once by whispering:

"Yes, it's all right. Awfully glad you've got here, but you won't mind it if I whisper, will you, for I've caught a jolly bad cold,—voice all gone, don't you know, down to my boots or some way, and I can hardly make myself heard at all in this babel."

"Maude never came," Kitty went on, almost tearfully, now that she had at last found an anchor, "and I was getting so horribly frightened."

"Oh, she's here all right," Mephistopheles returned calmly. "I'm sure I saw her,—rig just like yours, don't you know,—and in any case she told me yesterday that if we got separated, which is awfully likely in a place like this, we were to leave at twelve sharp for Arthur's rooms, where we're all to have supper. So don't let's bother too much about them, you and I can be perfectly happy together," bending so low that Kitty shrank from the hot breath on her cheek, resenting angrily the changed tone and the almost affectionate squeeze he gave to the little hand on his arm.

It was a horrible evening, for though the costumes were pretty and many of them excruciatingly funny, Kitty just couldn't enjoy herself. She kept thinking miserably of Tom at home; they saw no sign of Maude and her brother; and last, but not least, Mr. Chetwood seemed so hideously unlike himself.

In spite of the admiration Maude Weston had always hinted at, he had never once, during all of Kitty's intercourse with him, overstepped in any way the bounds of ordinary conventionality. But to-



night a horrible change seemed to have come over him. He kept murmuring things that no man but Tom had ever dared to say to her—while Kitty, feeling him to be her only protector in that awful place, dared not keep him too much at a distance, especially as she realized miserably that by placing herself in a false position she had brought it all upon herself.

The relief she experienced was past expression when Mr. Chetwood whispered in her ear, "It wants just a quarter to twelve now. Mrs. Seaton; you'd better get on your wraps. I'll call a cab and we'll start at once for Brexton's rooms. Too bad we've missed them all evening, but I've been divinely, dangerously happy," holding her so close that Kitty couldn't withdraw her hand from his arm and longed to scream for help. She got into her wraps and followed Mephistopheles out to the waiting cab. Once inside and off, an arm went round her waist and she was drawn close to his breast in spite of her efforts to free herself—her horror of him giving Mephistopheles a thrill of exquisite joy, though he felt like a brute as he doggedly resolved to see the thing through to the bitter end.

"Darling," he whispered, "how can you treat me like this? Surely you must have known that I loved you, or you would never have consented to go to such a place with me. Don't struggle so, dearest, you've let me see too much to turn back now."

But Kitty continued to struggle desperately, feeling that her mind was giving way, and dreading each moment that she would lose consciousness altogether. She put both hands behind her back that he might not kiss them, trying to shrink from him into the opposite corner of the carriage.

Then suddenly the cab halted, and before she could grasp his purpose her hands were tied firmly behind her, and a black silk muffler was thrown over her head, while the now hated voice whispered in her ear,—

"Don't think me a brute, darling; I'll explain everything in an instant; but if you have any regard for your reputation and Tom's, don't make an outcry, I beseech you, but come with me quietly, and you shall be free immediately."

More dead than alive, Kitty stepped out of the carriage, Mephistopheles's arm about her waist to guide and support her.

She stumbled up some steps and was let in at a door, which was closed behind her, then more steps—they were entering a room. With a thrill of despair she heard the door locked and stood stock still, a pathetic monument of misery, in the centre of the floor.

"Mrs. Seaton," said Mephistopheles, still whispering, "as I said before, I took for granted that you loved me when you were willing to accompany me to such a place. And loving you as I did, I was only

too wildly happy at the thought of being with you to care about the rendezvous. But now you must explain, for Mrs. Weston and her brother never turned up at all; I knew this and have carried you off to supper in my rooms. You're perfectly safe with me,—I wouldn't hurt you for the world,—but I naturally resent your treatment of me in the face of everything, and, if you wish it, will let you go immediately after you have given me some explanation of your most extraordinary behavior, for I'm not in the habit of forcing my love where it's not desired. But" (brutally) "I need perhaps not remind you how Tom is likely to regard this escapade."

Then poor, little, captive Kitty, her hands still tied in spite of all her efforts, and feeling almost suffocated by the black thing over her head, which, while thin, shut out her vision like a pall, broke down entirely, sobbing out the whole story of Mrs. Weston's plan, which had seemed so innocent and now appeared so deadly.

"And now once more," she sobbed in conclusion, "I beseech you to let me go; if you have one spark of manliness in you, set me free, though if, as you say, you have ruined me forever in Tom's eyes, it were far kinder to kill me at once, for I love him with all my heart and soul and mind. I've never loved any other man nor been untrue to him even in my thoughts for one single instant. Let me run to him and take my chances, and then die if he drives me away."

In the twinkling of an eye Mephistopheles threw back his head-dress and mask, the black thing was snatched from her head, and as Kitty gazed up into Tom's dear face and saw herself in her own room, Tom caught her in his arms as she fainted away altogether.

What that good fellow lived through during the next ten minutes is best pictured by Doré's illustrations of the "Inferno." But when he had forced a glass of wine between the white lips, and knelt, chafing the poor, little, cold hands, Kitty came back to life and Tom gathered her to his broad breast, where she sobbed out all her troubles, while he reviled himself continually as the greatest brute alive.

Then when she was growing comparatively calm again, he told her about the European surprise, adding with a twinkle in his eyes which seemed a little too glistening to look quite natural,—

"And when we get back, darling, we'll let the Burke-Westons slide!"



## HEART HUSBANDRY

BY IDA WHIPPLE BENHAM

I PLANTED scorn: it died in the garden mold.  
 I planted love: it bore a flower of gold.  
 I planted doubt: it withered, lacking root.  
 I planted faith: it ripened precious fruit.

# DE PROFUNDIS

*By Francis Howard Williams*



HIS personal estate amounted to eight hundred and one thousand three hundred dollars. He had just made the estimate carefully, conservatively, and he was always exact. The odd three hundred dollars represented the value of a burial-lot in Saint Matthew's church-yard. He attended Saint Matthews,—was in the vestry, in fact,—and donated a fraction of his income annually to the purposes of the parish. He was a moderately high churchman,—liked altar candles and a choral service. His wife drew the line at a pink stole, but his daughter went on to incense and auricular confession. He tolerated these shadings of opinion with benevolence and resignation; his own views were quite fixed,—“well-grounded,” he called them,—and only Heaven and himself knew what satisfaction he got out of them. The same remarks applied to the eight hundred and one three, though just what Heaven had to do with that is problematical.

Mr. Dalrymple knew well enough that the Almighty was busy keeping the stars on their courses; he (Dalrymple) would look after his investments in New York Central and see that he didn't get on the wrong side of the market in Erie. That was practical, for how otherwise should he be able to assist Providence financially at the end of the year? Mr. Dalrymple had made a neat calculation that it cost eight thousand dollars to save one heathen in Dahomey through the medium of the Foreign Missions Society; Mr. Dalrymple, having contributed twelve thousand dollars to foreign missions, felt that he personally had saved a soul and a half. That was common-sense, it was arithmetic. He had, indeed, so commercialized righteousness that he was morally certain that no combination of the market could beat him. So he sat on the pier, with gold eye-glasses balanced across his thumb, and looked out to sea, and thought of the words of the litany and the muddle in Reading.

It really was too bad that a man so profitably engaged should be interrupted, yet these annoyances will come, the world is so illy ordered.

“From envy, hatred, and malice.”

The Rev. Ethelbert Durand, S.T.D., always pronounced the words “hatrid” and “maless,” and held his voice well up on the high C.

The remembrance of it drifted across Mr. Dalrymple's mind. The choir and congregation responded, like a recitative from *Trovatore*,—

"Good Lord, deliver us."

It was just then that she slouched along the pier. She wasn't pretty and she wasn't polite; she had on a dress of changeable silk dragged at the skirts and dissipated in general aspect, and she wore six rings of paste jewels. She was accompanied by a man who smelt of beer and needed shaving. Evidently they were out for a holiday, for the man was partly intoxicated already and it was only ten A.M.

The woman was talking earnestly. Her grammar was bad and she elided her *g*'s execrably. Neither were her hands well kept, and but for a rose stuck carelessly in her hair, one might have supposed her quite reft of the feminine trivialities.

"Good Lord, deliver us,"

thought Mr. Dalrymple. Then, as he overheard some of the conversation thus involuntarily thrust upon him, he looked up and shivered.

It was an outrage that such persons should be allowed to mingle with the better classes at public resorts.

Yet he listened under the conviction that the time had come for churchmen to show themselves abreast of the Parkhursts and Philistines, and even as he listened he found himself garnering whole stores of powerful moral lessons against a future need, for the pair soon drifted into a quarrel, and Mr. Dalrymple was regaled with an assortment of Billingsgate quite out of the ordinary, until at last the man got to his feet unsteadily and commanded the woman to "come away." She looked at him obliquely from eyes that were full of defeat. There was a light in them which might once have been love, but was now something malign and sinister.

He jerked his thumb over his shoulder imperiously, and the woman arose and followed him like a whipped dog.

"You've spoiled my day, good and sure," she said.

"Don't be a fool, Ag!" growled the man. Then they moved slowly away.

Mr. Dalrymple turned in his chair and watched this estimable couple until they were lost in the crowd on the boardwalk. His chest swelled with conscious piety.

"Why does the Almighty permit such creatures to live, I wonder?" He uttered the words half aloud.

"What a mercy it would be if they were all strangled or drowned!"

Then he sighed, "Ah me!" and turned his gaze upon the variegated throng on the sand below the pier,—men lean and lank, men chubby and round, women with large waists and small hats, and women with

large hats and small waists,—all deceiving themselves with the notion that they were having a good time.

Mr. Dalrymple sat in profound meditation; then he arose and looked upon the prosperous face of his respectably heavy watch. He didn't like crowds, and while he enjoyed the exhilaration of the surf, preferred to seek the more sequestered sand a mile farther down the beach. So he left the pier and sauntered down the broad promenade with the air of a bank president.

Bank presidents, it is to be noted, always walk as though they were conferring a favor upon Providence, and although Mr. Dalrymple wasn't one of these, he easily might have been; for, having made a fortune in flour, he was deemed especially qualified for finance. Yet he hadn't accepted any presidency; like Warwick, he was satisfied to be the maker of kings; he wanted to command his own time, to attend to his own puts and calls, and maintain his hold on righteousness and the Dahomey heathen. So his walk had the presidential cadence and his heart hummed the litany in a major key, while he sauntered down for a quiet dip in the ocean. And when at last his rotund person, encased in a bathing-suit which enhanced the prosperity of its outlines, plunged into the surf, his feelings of peace with all the world were enviable indeed. The water was delightful,—a little cold, perhaps; but he wouldn't remain in too long. No, he had had a touch of rheumatism and knew better than to trifle with fate. The sun sparkled on the white, curling edges of foam. How fine the swell was just beyond the breakers! Even Mr. Dalrymple had a dim consciousness of beauty,—a remnant left beneath the crust of convention. He dived through a breaker and swam out quite like a young man. How far the horizon looked,—how mistily defined against the sky wavered the rim of the sea! Mr. Dalrymple blew the water between his lips after the manner of the corpulent Triton depicted in primary text-books of the Greek mythology. He enjoyed the whole business immensely. But quite without warning there came over him a singular sense of contraction; the sea-line blurred into a smear of green; a spasm of pain shot through his chest and he felt the dark in his brain. He tried to strike out with his arms and legs, but there was no muscular response to the edict of his will. The litany was in the key of C, but it was the mere ghost of an echo; it came from miles and miles and was mingled with the husky whispers of the sea.

“From battle and murder and from sudden death.”

Rev. Durand, S.T.D., must have got his pitch from the organ, it was so correct. Mr. Dalrymple had never so fully appreciated the tremendous significance of the prayer,—

“From sudden death!”

At first the accent fell upon the adjective. How awful! How impending! What sense of unpreparedness! Then there came a change; the whole weight of the mighty invocation centred itself upon that tremendous noun, that inclusive substantive,—“Death.”

The Rector’s lenten face was looking drawn and grave above the faultless white of his surplice. He ended correctly on the high C. The choral response came flooding up the nave with the liquid swish of waves,—

“Good Lord, deliver us!”

Mr. Dalrymple never had joined in the response with so genuine a sense of spiritual exaltation. His lungs seemed bursting, but somehow he had to stop and listen: “Tick, tick, tick. Reading off an eighth.”

Oh, who cares? With a personal estate worth eight hundred thousand dollars, one almost may adopt the outworn motto of Monte Cristo. Yet, if it be mine—the world? What is the world? A fly-speck on the universe, one of the myriad little balls which the Divine Juggler keeps in the air to astonish his audience withal. He’ll put it away in his basket, by and by, and go on with the next trick. “Tick, tick, tick. Reading off an eighth.”

“From battle and murder and from sudden death.”

Surely Mr. Dalrymple’s head is bursting. Salt water is running out of his nostrils and his eyes are void of all save blackness and throbbing yellow spots,—not all yellow,—white and yellow; daisies, daisies! A field full of them. How familiar is that old upland rounding against the blue! He plucks a flower for his hat-band and lifts his bare feet high lest the sharp grass cut his toes; boys in the country learn to be so shrewd in these matters. Ah, a meadow-lark! It’s a third of a century since Dalrymple killed it with a stone, and he wishes now that he hadn’t. What a pity too that he didn’t do the square thing in his settlement with G. Q. Jarvis & Co. last winter. He got them on the hip in the stock panic and broke them up. Mrs. Jarvis was giving piano-lessons to keep the family afloat at last accounts. Mr. Dalrymple thought how he should like to send her a snug check,—if only he could get to his desk,—his desk with its neat inkstand and clean blotting-pad, which seemed so far off and unattainable.

“Tick, tick.” No, *not* that! The roll of the organ, out from the chancel and far down the nave,—the long, withdrawing roar of the ebb.

He was pushing hard against watery masses, but his muscles quivered and refused to act. What is this strange impotence? The rushing in his ears is as a sigh of God.

“From sudden death.”

Mr. Dalrymple will respond this time though the effort burst his lips. Can he end on the high C? No matter.

"Good Lord, deliver—me!"

The undercurrent is sucking him out; he sees the sun's rays refracted through a foot of water above his face.

"Heaven—help——"

But Heaven doesn't hear. The sun only laughs; its shine comes dimmer, through two feet of water now.

"Help!" He only thinks it this time; speech is drowned out. There is no divine apocalypse bursting upon his hungry gaze, only a bit of slimy seaweed swirled past in the ebb.

Can it be that a man worth eight hundred thousand dollars must die like a superfluous kitten in a tub? Will God forget the money given to His cause,—the salvation of one and a half souls net? A numbness like a pall spreads over Mr. Dalrymple's consciousness. Upon his eyes the pressure of translucent waters; within his ears chords as of a harmony heard through the hushed aisles of sleep. Visions coming quick as light,—vanishing down iridescent vistas. A mother's face, bending low and lower,—the forehead seamed a little where the white hair lies like a benison upon her brow; eyes blue and faded; thin hands holy with the kisses of the years; a voice that dwindles into nothingness amid the hiss of overmastering waves; the sharp staccato of a something hated, mechanical, rattling like a man's laughter heard in hell,—“Tick, tick, tick, Western Union 87”—— Good God! Is there no pity in the bosoms of Thy angels—no deeper music than a choral service in the key of C? The ebb sucks hard, with a guttural sound rising to a monotone of words:

“Man that is born of woman hath but a short time to live and is full of misery. He cometh up and is cut down like a flower.”

This time Rev. Durand is reading from a book. His surplice drifts out and on in ludicrous extension. A snow-hill,—boys ruddy and rollicking on sleds that speed superbly. Dalrymple is himself but fourteen; he shoots, head first, on the foremost sled and lands in a snow-bank which turns to water at his touch,—water salt as tears, all-compelling as fate,—an eternity of unrest, swallowing time and all men's loves and longings like a grave.

Mr. Dalrymple, thinking of his wife who drew the line at a pink stole, and of his daughter who went on to incense and auricular confession, grasped upward, if haply he might find the hand of God stretched down to help him. He struck a hand whose fingers were covered with paste rings. He was dimly conscious of a strange incon-

gruity, but could not connect cause and effect; the movement by which he clung to the arm above him was mechanical; yet he somehow realized a brightening of light,—a quick warmth of air. He gasped painfully and heard the gurgle and inrush at his throat. He would have struggled, had he not felt the slender body beneath him sink at his smallest movement. A voice fell on his senses with a recent familiarity.

“Keep steady an’ I’ll get yer in. If yer kick, we’re both done fur.”

The voice was a woman’s and the tone had in it the savor of command; so Mr. Dalrymple lay quite still, with palsied arms upon her back, his highly respectable chin resting between her quite disreputable shoulders. The woman was heading for shore, swimming hard, her head well up, and snatching at the air with quick breaths between her teeth. Mr. Dalrymple’s consciousness was slowly clearing; he looked towards the beach and tried to persuade himself that the distance thereto was lessening. Then he resolved upon several generous actions in the event of his being saved, the extent of these potential benefactions increasing each time he felt the frail body beneath him settle in the water, as the quivering muscles struggled at their work. There was silence for a minute and a half; then the woman whispered something; he thought her words were, “We’ll try floating,” but she spoke so illy and elided her *g*’s in such a vulgar manner that he was not certain. As she turned he only had time to note the dilation of her nostrils, tremulous and appealing, ere he felt called upon again to involve the aid of the Almighty arm.

Could it be that the answer was to be delivered through so pitiable a medium? Could it be that within a bosom reft of sex should dwell a heart capable of divine commiseration?

The voice of Rev. Durand, S.T.D., came faintly to Mr. Dalrymple’s ears. He wasn’t intoning; again he was reading from a book,—

“Faith, hope, charity; these three, but the greatest of these . . .”

The break of the waters drowned the rest. The woman was breathing hard and quick, even as one who suffers and endures and struggles on; and ever through the pain and pity of it came the undertone of the Rector’s voice,—

“Greater love than this hath no man, that he lay down his life for . . .”

Again the water and the woman’s breath. The veins were like whips at her temples and there was a blue ring about her lips. Mr. Dalrymple’s heart sank as he saw that her head was drooping; the sea was at her mouth. But suddenly he heard the grating of sand, and



in a moment more the man who smelt of beer and needed shaving had laid upon them a strong grip.

Up on the beach the sun was hot and pitiless, and when Mr. Dalrymple realized that he was beyond reach of the waves, he struggled to his knees and looked down at the woman lying there with her drawn face turned defiantly towards the copper sky.

"Get some brandy," he managed to stammer out.

"Come, brace up, Ag, there's a good girl," said the other man.

She didn't answer.

"I'm sorry I left yer in the water, Ag. I wouldn't 'a' done it if I hadn't 'a' been drunk."

The blue ring deepened about her lips and a little blood oozed between her teeth. The heart of a ruined woman had ceased to beat, and the tired old world had gotten rid of one more of its sorrows.

Mr. Dalrymple happily was saved to make his responses in C. As for the man who smelt of beer and needed shaving, he had to go home alone; and he kept sober until after the funeral.



## MY SOUL

BY CARRIE BLAKE MORGAN

WITHIN my castle keep a prisoner stands,  
And cries to me, and beats, with tireless hands,  
Against his bars. I did not prison him,  
Nor did I build his dungeon, hot and dim.

And yet he cries to me to set him free,  
Or sing unto the world the song that he  
Doth pour into my ear. The heavenly strain  
My weakling voice doth struggle with in vain.

Strive as I may, my song is not his song;  
And so he stands there, sad-faced, all day long,  
And I his jailer am. Oh, woe is me!  
I cannot voice my own soul's melody!

# THE PREDICAMENT OF SILAS SINGER

*By Elliott Flower*



SILAS SINGER was ailing. It would not be correct to say that he was sick, for there was nothing serious the matter with him, but he himself insisted that he was ailing, and surely he ought to know. He needed some sort of treatment, but he was not sure what it ought to be. While he was debating this question in his mind some one suggested a vapor-bath cabinet:

"It is evident," said this authority, "that your circulation is not what it should be. You need something that will open the pores, give tone to the skin, and freshen you up generally. Some feature of your interior mechanism is loafing on its job and needs to be stirred up."

Silas was not at all sure that the home-made vapor-bath would do the work, but it certainly could do no harm. It was worth trying, at any rate. Some men are so constituted mentally that they have to do a little doctoring now and then in order to preserve their peace of mind, and Silas was one of them. When he was very busy he was all right, but when business was dull and his mind reverted to his physical condition he always found that something was wrong with him. Then he would take digestive tablets or some new tonic with great regularity until business became brisk again, whereupon he would forget all about his ailments and his remedies. If he had taken exercise, it would have been better, but he did that only occasionally for perhaps two days in succession. The vapor-bath idea, however, impressed him favorably, and he straightway purchased an outfit.

Now, it stands to reason that a man ought not to fool with one of these things in the absence of his wife, for she alone knows where it ought to be set up, and she alone can attend to the preliminaries satisfactorily. But Silas Singer was an enthusiast in all that he undertook, and an enthusiast is always in a hurry to secure results. The day the vapor-bath was delivered he returned home early and found that it had been deposited in his study.

"Well," he remarked to himself, "this is as good a place as any. This is my den, and I will not be disturbed here."

It was a good two hours before dinner, and his wife, he learned from the maid, had gone out to make some calls.

Being a fairly resourceful man, and having a book of instructions, it did not take him long to get the vapor-bath cabinet in working order. But he was cautious. Before either disrobing or starting the blaze that was to create the vapor he experimented, "to see," as he expressed it, "what kind of a fit it was." Seating himself on the chair within, he closed it round him like a drygoods box, his head alone sticking out through a hole in the top. It proved to be rather a tight squeeze, but he was able to shut himself in, and he smiled with cheerful anticipation of the immediate flight of all bodily ailments.

"It certainly ought to do me a lot of good," he soliloquized. "What we mortals need is something that will make our pores attend strictly to business. I'll bet Martha will find me fresher and brighter to-night than I have been for a year."

Then he lighted it up, disrobed, fastened himself in the cabinet, and waited. It was rather slower in setting about the work to be done than he had anticipated, but the sensations were pleasurable, and he only regretted that he had not been thoughtful enough to lay a paper on the top of the cabinet so that he could pass the time by reading. But that was a minor matter. The main thing was that he was being brought back to a condition of perfect health. He could actually feel the change, but it came in spots. Some parts of his anatomy were being rejuvenated more rapidly than others. This set him to wondering whether the thing were working right, and he began to worry. It was annoying to have a blaze that he could not see in such close proximity to him; it might set something afire and scorch him before he could release himself.

"This thing is bound to make a man perspire one way or another," he muttered; "if the steam doesn't do it, the anxiety will. My head, which is outside, is perspiring worse than the rest of me that's inside."

Then a fly settled on the tip of his nose. He shook it off, and it settled on his forehead. He shook it off again, and it went back to his nose, after which it tried to locate on one ear.

"I'd give a million dollars," he exclaimed, "for just one swat at that fly."

But the fly was forgotten when he heard a step in the hall.

"Great Scott! I wonder if I locked that door?" he muttered anxiously.

The answer came almost immediately, for the door slowly opened and a strange man looked in. He hastily dodged back when he saw the room was occupied, but almost instantly looked in again and surveyed with some curiosity what was visible of the astonished occupant.

The latter's first impulse was to jump up, but he realized his utter helplessness, and also the danger of any sudden move with a blaze immediately beneath him.

"Who are you?" he demanded. "What are you doing here?"

"Me!" answered the stranger, slowly entering. "Oh, my name's Bill or Tom or Reddy or 'most any old thing, an' I come in 'cause somebody left the front door open."

"A sneak-thief!" ejaculated Silas.

"Don't you git to callin' no names," retorted the stranger, "'cause a man wot calls names has got to back it up, an' you ain't in no shape to back up nothin'. I could paste you one easy."

The perspiration was coming faster than Silas desired. The mental strain of trying to decide what he could do was of great assistance to the vapor in producing results.

"Have you taken anything yet?" he asked.

"Nix, not," replied the stranger with cheerful friendliness. "I got into this room first, 'cause it was close to the door."

"Well, if you will go out without touching anything, I'll let you go and say nothing about it."

"T'anks," said the stranger, without giving any indication of an intention to depart.

"If you don't," persisted Silas, "I'll call for help."

The stranger coolly closed the door and sat down on a chair in front of the bath-cabinet.

"I didn't know you was in," he explained easily. "I t'ought the two girls was all, an' that wouldn't worry me, an' it don't worry me now. No sure-thing gent would want the female servants to see him cavortin' 'round in a short-skirt dry-goods box, like you'd be if you stood up. They'd be worse scaret of you than they would of me; an', besides, if you make a whimper, I'll paste you one alongside the ear an' put you in a tangle that'll be nothin' short of disgraceful. No, sir, nix, not; you ain't in the shape to make no holler—not unless you're lookin' for somethin' scand'lous."

Silas realized that the man spoke the truth; and that did not make his predicament any the more pleasant. Irrespective of the presence of the thief, the vapor-bath had continued as long as he desired. He felt that he was melting away, and he wanted relief.

"For Heaven's sake, get out and let me get out of this, anyway!" he pleaded. "I can't stand it."

"Nix, not," replied the stranger, that apparently being his peculiar form of emphatic negative. "It's doin' you good. Them things is fine for a man wot lives too high. If you move, I'll knock you wrong side 'n. Jest be comf'table wile I'm pickin' up a few things, an' I'll let the rest of the house go."

"Be comfortable," groaned Silas, "with a temperature of over two hundred and still rising."

"Let 'er rise," returned the stranger. "If you could only see yourself, you'd think it was funny enough to be worth all it hurts. But I ain't goin' to be long."

With that he got up and made a quick survey of the room.

"Books!" he said scornfully. "Don't want 'em. Don't bring no sort of price, an' they're hard to carry. Pipes!" he added, as his eyes rested on the desk. "Now, that's more like. I been lookin' for a good pipe." Here he put a fine meerschaum in his pocket, and then took possession of some solid silver desk ornaments. "Don't seem to be much else but the clothes," he went on.

"There's a little money in the vest pocket," Silas suggested plaintively. Freedom at the cost of the cash to be found in his pockets would be cheaply bought, for he was sure that he was losing an ounce a minute.

"Sure," answered the stranger, as he proceeded to roll the clothes up and tie them with a string, "an' a watch too; but I can go through the clothes w'en I gets away."

Silas nearly upset the cabinet in his excitement.

"You're not going to take the clothes!" he cried.

"W'y not?" retorted the thief. "I need 'em."

"But think of me!" he pleaded. "I'll have to go upstairs like this to get any more."

"Stand up!" commanded the thief.

Silas dared not disobey. With great caution he stood up, and the thief put out the blaze beneath the chair. Then he stood off and looked at his victim critically.

"Them there box coats ain't wot they're cracked up to be," he said. "This one you're a-wearin' ought to be longer so's to look real well, an' I tell you honest, if the servants sees you a-sneakin' up the stairs with your legs an' feet stickin' out below like they are now, it'll be up to you to explain to the coppers an' the fireman wot's been happenin'. But don't say I never done nothin' for you: I put out the fire that was sweaten' you all up."

The thief picked up the bundle of clothes and opened the study door.

"Don't holler," he cautioned. "You'd scare them girls to death if they come on you sudden. You ain't a bit pretty in that rig."

This was quite true. There is nothing attractive about a box standing on two human legs and surmounted by a human head, and Silas was uncertain as to what move he ought to make. He unfastened the cabinet sufficiently to get rid of the chair the moment the thief had disappeared, and then fastened it up again. It was t

covering he had, and would have to serve him until he could get upstairs to his room. He was just preparing to make a run for it, cabinet and all, when the outer door opened, and his wife entered, accompanied by two ladies.

"I believe that man was a thief," she was saying excitedly. "Did you notice how he scurried away? I must see if anything is missing."

Silas had just time to turn the key in the study door when she tried it.

"Locked!" she exclaimed. "Who's in there?"

"It's I—Silas," he answered.

"Let me in!" she cried. "I'm sure there's been a thief in the house."

"Correct," replied Silas. "He just left."

"Well, why don't you come out and chase him?" she demanded.

"Chase him!" moaned Silas, as he looked at himself and mentally pictured the furor he would create rushing down the street. "I—I am too busy, dear."

"Too busy to catch a thief!" ejaculated Mrs. Singer. "Why, the man's crazy—something must have happened to him. Silas Singer, why don't you open that door?"

Silas fairly danced about the room in impotent rage. If only those other women weren't there!

"Go away! go away!" he cried at last. "I can't be disturbed just now."

"I won't go away," retorted Mrs. Singer. "That man must have frightened you into insanity. If you don't come right out and go after him, I'll get an axe and break the door down."

"Oh, please go away," pleaded Silas. "Think of the scandal if——"

Here he paused abruptly, and Mrs. Singer looked blankly at her two friends.

"I think I'll have to be going," suggested one of them nervously. "I'll telephone to the police for you, if you wish."

"Do," said Mrs. Singer. "That man certainly has done some harm here, regardless of what he may have taken. Silas is certainly out of his head."

"Perhaps I'd better get a doctor," suggested the other.

"By all means," said Mrs. Singer thankfully.

"Doctor! doctor!" cried Silas, who had caught this last suggestion. "Hang the doctor! I don't want a doctor; I want a tailor!"

The two ladies looked at Mrs. Singer with sorrowful sympathy, murmured something to the effect that it was "too bad," and quickly retired.

"Have they gone?" asked Silas, as he heard the door close.

"Yes, dear," replied Mrs. Singer soothingly. "Will you let me in now?"

"Is the coast clear?" persisted Silas, ignoring her question.

"Yes, dear."

"All the way to my room?"

"All the way."

"Ellen, the maid, on the stairs anywhere?"

"No. I'm quite alone."

He unlocked the door, but hesitated a moment before opening it.

"I'm coming out," he said, "but I want you to understand that if you laugh at me there will be a murder committed in this house. I've had all the humor I can stand to-day."

"Poor man!" she sighed. "I wonder what that thief did to him. I must be very gentle with him until the doctor comes."

Then the door opened and he marched out. He didn't scurry for the stairs; on the contrary, he moved with deliberation and a painful attempt at dignity. In his effort to avoid making any more of a spectacle of himself than was absolutely necessary he actually added to the humor of the situation.

"Good Heaven!" cried Mrs. Singer, uncertain whether she ought to laugh or cry, "what *have* you been doing?"

"I have been taking a vapor bath," he answered coldly and calmly.

"Oh! a vapor bath," she repeated, bewildered; "but I—I didn't know it was customary to carry the cabinet about in that way."

He was part way up the stairs, but he turned and addressed her deliberately and impressively.

"Mrs. Singer," he said, "if you laugh, I'll wreck this house. A sneak-thief got my clothes."

She didn't laugh; oh, no! She just went up to the sewing-room, where she would be out of the way, and shut the door and lay down on a lounge and went into paroxysms of—something that merely sounded like laughter, in all probability. But, being a wise woman, she never mentioned the subject again, even showing sufficient self-control to refrain from asking what became of the bath-cabinet.



## COMPENSATION

THE dusk that steals the world away  
Undoes a beacon star;  
So, Years, when you have touched me gray  
Will hope shine out afar?

# HER MISTAKEN VOCATION

*By Judith Underwood*



SHE had hesitated about sending in her card,—she knew so little as to the customs of the monastery,—but she would vastly have preferred that Frater Ludovicus should come to her unannounced. So when the sandal-footed friar who kept the door made no inquiry as to her name, but took her straightway into the small, plain parlor, she was glad. It occurred to her then that she had once heard that a priest must always come when asked for help. He could not refuse. The porter slipped silently away, and with the image of the coarse, brown cassock that he wore still clear before her, she tried to picture Louis—Ludovicus now—in any such raiment; sniffing a faint, fishy odor that came from the kitchens, she thought with a sort of scorn of the meagre diet that went with Louis's "holy poverty."

"From all that I am rescuing him," Ann mused, and there was even a little bravado in the suggestion, although she knew that the whole affair was yet to be transacted. But she was so sure, so very sure, that if Louis knew of her turning from her own ways, his greatest joy would be to meet her before she had advanced half of one wavering step to him. Hard as she was when she thought of any lifetime without Louis, the few stern principles which had prevented Ann from going to shipwreck, for all of her adventures, would have kept her now from appealing to Louis if he had taken his final vows.

"But he is only a Brother, not a Father," she chuckled. "He will find that he has no vocation, and can turn back. And I will find that I have a vocation—for domesticity, for love. Her buoyancy was such that she forgot herself and became interested, in her old, quizzical way, in the environment of the place. There was a box of scapulars, blessed for children, on the table. A small china vessel at the entrance held holy water. People were coming and going from the great world, as they always did on the day of the ordinations, and Ann, from her shadowy seat behind it, watched through the crack of the door as each one crossed himself on coming in and on going out.

There was a private parlor beyond, and Ann heard one of the visitors say that in this room the young men were taking leave of their relatives. Ann wondered if Louis had any relatives. She had always thought such things rather stupid, and had never bothered asking Louis anything about his parents, although it seemed to her he had



once said he had some, somewhere. Ann heard part of what was said in the room beyond. In broken English a German woman was speaking joyously of her son's future. There was no doubt that she was happy over it. Ann could see her poorly fitting dress and the careless "dips" of the skirt that she wore. "I would look as bad as she does if I depended on my own taste," smiled Ann, for she was in a mood to be merry. She was still enjoying her little joke when she caught a glimpse of the woman's face. It was a rough, peasant contour, such as Millais would have loved to paint,—a brown, heavy face, with coarse, straight hair, but it was beautiful, even more beautiful than Millais could have made it, for the woman was transfigured with the realization of the dream for which her whole life had been spent. Her heart-history was all revealed in her face at this moment. Her son was giving her the blessing which his ordination as Frater had empowered him to give: "*Benedictio Omnipotentis Dei et Filii et Spiriti Sancti descendet super te et maneat semper.*" Tenderly he spoke the words, and Ann started at the sound of his voice.

The blessing was over. The woman came striding through the parlor. She crossed herself with the holy water, and the young priest came after her, intent on the same ceremony.

Ann covered her eyes with the tips of her fingers. "I'll not know it; I'll not let myself know it," she whispered, but her hands dropped despite her effort, her eyes turned whether she would or no. "I'm the Lady of Shalott," she moaned. "The mirror will crack from side to side, and the curse will come upon me." Through the space from behind the door she saw what she knew she would see. For only a moment she beheld his well-remembered face, cast in a finer mold than that of his mother, but touched now with the same beauty. He gave his mother a look of tenderness; she knelt for an instant at the door of the wide hall; then the two parted, the mother to carry her joy home with her, and the son to disappear behind the swinging doors that led to the cloistered portion of the monastery.

The sandal-footed porter came noiselessly down the hall, and the downcast eyes of his long experience swept the shadowy space behind the door as he came towards the parlor. The place was empty now, save for Ann, and he approached her at once. He looked beyond her, towards the table. "I have told Frater Ludovicus," he said, "and he will come to you very soon."

"There is no need," replied Ann. "I intended to make a charitable donation and to ask Frater Ludovicus to take charge of it, but I find I have left one of my papers at home and can do nothing. I will come again to-morrow—no, I will send."

The porter closed the great door, and Ann, descending into the street, struck her hand roughly against the stonework, finding the pain a relief.

# A BIT OF HUMAN NATURE

BY

ELLEN OLNEY KIRK

AUTHOR OF "AN ANTI-CLIMAX," "THE STORY OF  
MARGARET KENT," "OUR LADY VANITY," ETC.

"Then she plots, then she ruminates, then she  
devises; and what she thinks in her heart she may  
effect, she will break her heart but she will effect."



PHILADELPHIA  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY  
1902

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# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER, 1902



## A BIT OF HUMAN NATURE

BY ELLEN OLNEY KIRK

*Author of "An Anti-Climax," "The Story of Margaret Kent,"  
"Our Lady Vanity," etc.*

### I.

EARLY one morning in May, when High Elms was a milky way made up of thousands and thousands of stars of apple, hawthorn, and dogwood blossoms, a young man, evidently equipped for a journey, with bag and umbrella, came out of a pleasant, embowered house on the main street, and was just about to turn the corner when he encountered a person, presumably an acquaintance, at whom he gazed aghast, then before whom he stopped short. It was a girl in a fresh suit of white duck, a broad hat, and a parasol. She had a face so full of bright clearness that it seemed to be this vivid freshness to which one succumbed, and not the actual beauty of feature, color, and outline. She too halted, looked at the young man, and while he stood tongue-tied, unable to address her, exclaimed, "Evidently, you are running away!"

"Yes," he replied, "I am running away."

"And running away from me!"

"Yes, from you."

The two stood gazing at each other a moment in silence, then he said, "I shall write you as soon as I reach New York."

She made no effort to repress her laughter.

"You are going to tell me that you give me up."

He took a step nearer.

"Dare I say that you are mine to keep or to renounce?"

"Have you any doubt?"

"This morning I doubt everything," he replied. "I have not slept; a thousand confused, miserable thoughts have been in my mind all night. The one certainty is that I dare not stay near you."

"It makes you too miserable to stay near me?"

"It makes me too happy!"

"You are going away because you are too happy?"

If some slight raillery in the girl's manner made itself felt, in her whole tone and expression there was so much that was delightful and beguiling that his grave face lighted up.

"Of course, you consider me incomprehensible," he now remarked. "But I intended to explain."

"By letter?"

He did not answer on the moment, but seemed to ponder. At this moment was heard the shriek of a locomotive.

"There goes my train!" he exclaimed.

"Also your chance of escape for a whole hour and fifty minutes?"

"Where could we talk?" he now asked. "I must have a chance to justify myself."

High Elms is near the sea, and after a walk through a quiet street, one may find a lane which, followed until it meets a foot-bridge over a tide-creek, comes presently upon sand-hills, and beyond them a stone-littered shore where there is a group of rocks. The place was already well-known to these two young people, and it was here that half an hour later they again encountered. The tide was out in the bay, and all the pebbles on the wide, bare beach were shining in the morning sunlight, taking on all the hues of the opal until they met the keen blue of the water-line.

On one of the rocks, partly in the shadow of a gnarled apple-tree, which, beaten and buffeted as it had been all its lifetime, still felt the stirring of the spring and now put on a mantle of rosy bloom, sat the girl, while the young man stood a little distance below, and leaned his arms on the ledge which she made her footstool.

"Now let me argue my own case," he said. "I want you to be the judge."

She gave a little wave of the hand.

"I will make a desperate plunge, and get my share of the confession soon over," he proceeded. "I have no intention of letting you think I am halting between two states of mind. I fell in love with you three years ago."

She listened with a feeling that with his eyes fixed on her face he was studying her every expression.

"Three whole years," she said, with some visible effort.

"What I said to myself then was, that you were fenced away from me with a warning to trespassers, 'Thou shalt not!' I was not only too poor a man to ask you to marry me, but my first duty then, as now, was to my mother and sisters."

"One of the reasons I like you so well," she replied with a soft

vehemence, "one of the reasons I trust you so much, is that you are so good to your mother and sisters."

"It would be strange indeed if I were anything but good to them. It has been a bribe to my ardor in my profession to make money for them. I do not intend always to be so poor that I cannot support them and have a wife and home; but how dare I say to the girl I love, 'I adore you, but wait for me five years,—wait for me ten years?'"

She laughed—a laugh that seemed to come from surer knowledge than his own, from some different point of view.

"That does not represent my idea of felicity," he went on gravely.

"What does?"

"Saying, 'Marry me next week,' and then being able to endow her with all that befits and belongs to her. Men know very well that while they are apt to declare that what is essential in a wife is good sense, prudence, economy, actually what holds us under the charm is incompatible with poverty. The cruellest deprivation poverty entails upon a man is subjecting his wife to the pinch of economy."

"I do not say that I am economical," she replied. "In fact, I am rather extravagant for a girl who has hardly a penny of her own."

He looked at her for a moment with a smile that grew a little strained, then said: "You are perfect. I would not have you otherwise. In ten years' time——"

Her lovely glance grew more arch.

"But you do not like ten years' time!"

"I like? I can have nothing that I like."

She laughed.

"Do you rest your case?"

"Yes, I rest my case."

"Am I to decide?"

"You are to decide."

"But I have a case," she said now, with some whim. "I wish to state it, but first I need to ask, in the general scheme of things which you propose where do I come in?"

He looked at her steadily. "I never dared ask myself that question until last night. Until then, exquisite beyond all women as I found you, intimate to my every thought, and necessary, above all, necessary to me, I never before, even in my wildest imagination, ventured to believe that it would make much difference to you whether I went or came."

Her eyes dropped under his glance. Her color rose. A certain emotional quality, so far well kept under in the interview, began to make itself felt.

"But I am not poor," she murmured. "I am to be rich, really rich."

An exclamation escaped him.

"What is it?" she demanded.

"That is what I have seen in you and felt in you—that I had no right——"

Her courage had come back. She laughed again.

"You insist upon a beggar-maid. I fancy that is the reason I have not told you before. Of course, individually I am poor, and, as you know, I have had the training of a poor girl. I have fitted myself to earn my own living, and I fancy I might earn my own living. But all the same, Aunt Laura has been behind me. She insisted upon my going through college and taking a degree. She wished that I should spend my powers upon some real work. She herself is conscious of being romantic. She desires to give me the chance of renouncing romantic ideals, of being able to rise above all sentimentalities, of putting unreasoning affection under my feet."

"And you have put unreasoning affection under your feet?" he demanded.

But it still took two hours to tell the whole story, and it was by the noon train that Basil Thorpe finally made his way to New York. While he was on his way Miss Ethel Fairlie occupied herself in writing the following letter:

"HIGH ELMS, May 4, 18——.

"MY DEAREST AUNT LAURA: I felt at the moment that Fate was behind our change of plans, that when I gave up going with you in order to stay behind and nurse Cousin Fanny, it meant more than that we were just simply parting to meet again after a few weeks. Fanny is almost well, and by the middle of June I can join you in London. But still, something will have happened. For, dearest Aunt Laura, I am engaged! To Basil Thorpe, of course. Nobody else has ever touched my heart. I recall your asking me once if there had been no one, and I said, 'Yes.' Still, if it had not all fallen out just as it has done, if I had not at this time happened to be in this quiet place with Cousin Fanny, and if Basil had not come to his mother's for ten days while looking up some documentary evidence concerning the title of some estate in litigation, all this might never have happened. He is the only son of Mrs. Torrey Thorpe, who used to live near you in New York until her husband died in the commercial crisis of '73, and left her a poor widow with this one son and two daughters. She has made every sacrifice for him, put all she had on the stake of securing him a good education, and placing him with Davis, Beekman & Company. He is now twenty-eight, and at the first vacancy in the firm will come into a junior partnership. His salary so far is chiefly devoted to the needs of his mother and sisters. In fact, he has always considered marriage out of the question, and if I were one of those meek, submissive creatures who feel that they have nothing to do with the shaping of their own destiny, we

should, Basil and I, have come up against a blank wall of dead negation. He feels that he has no right to drag me down to poverty, and certainly I am the last person in the world to wish to make his life an exhausting and depressing struggle for mere money to live on at the time when he needs to be able to put forth his best powers and show the best that is in him.

"But do I need to tell you this? Dear Aunt Laura, like a little child to its mother's breast I come. I love my debts to you. 'What else is my money for?' you have often said to me. And I have felt that for you to give is as sweet as for me to take. Then, dear Aunt Laura, I do like him so much. I do admire him so heartily. It would be such a keen pleasure to help him win in the race of life. He is worth all your confidence, all your belief. Mr. Beekman will tell you so. It is not to be a declared engagement yet, not until I have had my summer in England with you. Until then, as Basil says, it is just a delightful experiment. I will write again by the next mail, and tell you the exact day that I am to sail. Edward Bruce has provisionally engaged my passage for June 2, and Fanny grows all the time so much stronger, there seems no doubt that I shall be well able to leave her. To-day I have just this one thought, this one longing, this one plea. Your loving

"ETHEL."

## II.

"CERTAINLY there is a will," said Mr. Beekman. He shook his head, scowled, pursed up his lips. "Most undoubtedly there is a will."

Basil Thorpe saw the portents gather in the elder lawyer's face.

"I drew it up myself nine years ago," continued Mr. Beekman. "It was hastily executed, for Mrs. Hunter was believed to be on her death-bed. Every day and every hour since she has intended to make another will."

Of course, the lawyer would not commit himself, but Basil knew by every sign that Mr. Beekman deplored the fact of the existence of the will he had himself drawn up.

"She was at death's door," he continued. "They were afraid of heart-failure. The doctor kept his finger on her pulse, and constantly moistened her lips with some restorative. Nevertheless, a memorandum of her expressed wishes was made, signed, witnessed, and sealed within an hour. Mrs. Hunter did not die, but recovered and has lived for nine years. What had been done was regarded by her as a mere temporary expedient. Again and again she has said to me: 'I must make my will. I am only waiting to see a little more clearly what I ought to do about the property. Mr. Hunter did so dislike the idea of its being divided.'"

Mr. Beekman's whole manner showed no little feeling and anxiety. "It is possible that she may have made another will," he now went



on. "I hope and pray that she has done so. But it seems to me improbable. In a strange country, and not being proficient in French, she would hardly know how to set about it. Still, she might have had help and instruction from the embassy."

On this fifteenth of May it so chanced that Basil Thorpe was sitting near his senior at his desk, making the points of a brief, when Mr. Beekman, glancing over the morning's paper, had suddenly dropped it with an exclamation. He had come upon a cable despatch from Paris announcing the sudden death of Mrs. Oliver Hunter, of Madison Avenue, New York, from pneumonia, resulting from exposure to a shower two days before at the Longchamps races. Mr. Beekman's own concern was so deep, he had not observed any change of countenance in his companion. It was a relief to have an auditor, and that Basil seemed full of interest and sympathy was to be expected.

"It must have been the same sort of seizure she had nine years ago," Mr. Beekman proceeded. "Then she had just strength enough to falter out, 'I want it all left just as my husband suggested.' She could have said no more, and she needed to say no more, for I had drawn up Oliver Hunter's will myself, and had written the letter of instructions at his dictation."

As Mr. Beekman said this he met the eyes of Basil, who fairly faced him and seemed to ask something more explicit.

"You see, Thorpe," Mr. Beekman proceeded, "Oliver Hunter hated the idea of any division of his property. He was a careful, methodical man, liked every arrangement cut and dried, and had a great feeling for the symmetry of things. He had one nephew and Mrs. Hunter one niece, and although the whole property was left unconditionally to Mrs. Hunter, he realized the fact that she would soon have to pass it on to others. Accordingly his advice was that these two young people should be encouraged to marry, thus uniting their claims. Then if either his nephew or her niece refused to comply with the conditions, the one who refused should resign all claim to the property."

"And you drew up a will for Mrs. Hunter according to these extraordinary conditions?" said Basil, as if stupefied.

"I did," said Mr. Beekman sharply. "One cannot argue with a woman dying of heart-failure."

"May I ask who were these young people?" Basil now inquired.

"Oliver Hunter's nephew was Oliver Hunter Van Voorst, of Riverbend on the Hudson," explained Mr. Beekman. "The niece of Mrs. Hunter is Miss Ethel Fairlie, whom I dare say you may have met in High Elms."

The two men looked at each other a moment in complete silence. After that first look Mr. Beekman withdrew his glance, fidgeted in his chair, alternately crossing his legs and stretching them out to their

farthest limit. Something in Basil's expression was almost too vivid. The older man took refuge in speech.

"Mrs. Hunter never calculated, apparently, on the happening of mortal accidents to herself. She had been at death's door once, yet put off doing what was simple, natural, and, one might say, inevitable. She loved Ethel Fairlie as her own child. Nothing could have been so absolutely contrary to Mrs. Hunter's real intentions as any coercion of her niece's free will. The two were to have gone to Europe in March, but what did Mrs. Edward Bruce do but fall ill and send for Miss Ethel Fairlie? Why could not Mrs. Hunter have remained here as well instead of setting off alone for Paris, where she was to risk her life at races where she had no business to be, and die, leaving this poor girl the alternative of being left utterly destitute unless she marries a young man she has never seen in her life."

Basil made a gesture. "I think Miss Fairlie is not quite reduced to that," he now observed, with a half smile.

Mr. Beekman continued: "It is just like a woman, particularly like a rather clever woman. She jumped at conclusions, considering reason to be a slow and toilsome process. Oliver Hunter must have known that his wife could see nothing from any point of view except her own, yet he left her all his property without putting the matter of its ultimate destination in a clear and convincing light. I have never forgiven myself for letting him put in that absurd tag to his will, and then again perpetuating it in hers. She could not endure the idea of dividing the property against her husband's wishes,—at the same time admitted the claim of Oliver Van Voorst and kicked against it. She actually confided to me once that the reason she did not make her will was that she had heard that the young man was delicate and she was waiting for him to die."

As Mr. Beekman talked he had fidgeted himself out of his chair across the room to the window and back again. He had taken up papers, pretending to assort them, and had put them down.

"Fancy me, Mrs. Hunter's man of business, with that sort of a job on my hands. Just fancy it!" he said, with a groan.

"I hope that Mrs. Hunter made another will," said Basil succinctly.

"She hardly had time to make it in Paris," said Mr. Beekman, "and had she empowered any lawyer in New York to do it before she sailed, I should have the right to feel deeply hurt. However, if it turns out that she has done so, I shall put my own feelings out of the question and rejoice."

Mrs. Oliver Hunter had had no time to make another will. She had said at the beginning of her illness, "Oh, if Mr. Beekman were here!"

Later she had little sustained consciousness, and soon passed into delirium.

The cards were dealt down on the table, and Mr. Beekman was compelled to take them up and play as best he might.

### III.

THERE is hardly a pleasanter place on the Hudson River than the Van Voorsts' at Riverbend. Nearly opposite West Point, it commands a fine view of the mountains and, on each hand, of the river in its grandest reaches. If the red brick house had not been built for beauty, it had nevertheless attained that object by nestling into the landscape, shading itself with trees and vines. From the water the place offered an aspect of splendid woods, broken by one glimpse of the house and a balustrade of stone; but from the piazzas and terraces one could enjoy the expanse of the blue Hudson, with its every curve and bend, all the trees having been carefully grouped so that they should nowhere shut out the view. The house stood high, and the grounds descended to the river by a series of terraces, each of which at the right exposure became a garden devoted to flowers, vegetables, fruit, or vines. Thrift, plenty, comfort, all of the solid sort, showed in every detail of arrangement. It had originally been the old Ketaltas place, but at the beginning of the century Anneke Ketaltas, the sole heiress, had married her cousin, Peter Van Voorst, thus consolidating two large properties. Inside the commodious mansion life had gone on for generations in a quiet, stately way, every arrangement complete for comfort, the least want luxuriously provided for. At present the Van Voorst family consisted of Mrs. Peter Van Voorst, her two daughters, Sabrina, who was unmarried, and Amelia, Mrs. Vanderweyer, a widow, and her grandson, Oliver. Mrs. Van Voorst was by this time quite an old lady. She had lost her husband many years before, but had long survived that sorrow, and having been a beauty in her youth, and having all her life long been flattered, caressed, humored, still felt herself to be the centre of general social interest. She still had her little coqueties, her toilets were a matter of great moment, her caps and her frills being as important to her as to any of her Dutch ancestors, whose portraits adorned the walls. She enjoyed conversation and was easily enlivened by it, and had a way of interspersing her remarks with a little shriek. She delighted to carry about everywhere with her a variety of small possessions,—a fan, a vinaigrette, a hand-screen, a handkerchief, and a lorgnette,—and perhaps the one trouble of the old lady's life was that it was impossible always to keep these different articles within easy reach. They slipped and dropped and lost themselves in a way that suggested that they were possessed by a spirit of mischief. Both daughters were, however, so devoted to Mrs. Van Voorst

that they were glad of any opportunity for service. Miss Sabrina was the elder, and, stern in self-repression and self-discipline, all her energy and force of character were expended on her mother and nephew, for whom no sacrifice was too great. Mrs. Vanderweyer was a slight, rather delicate, colorless person, who liked comfort and ease, and who had found some compensation for the loss of her husband in the opportunity given her to return to her mother's house. The maternal devotion which she had had no chance to expend on children of her own was exercised in the bringing up of her nephew, Oliver Van Voorst, who had had the misfortune to lose both his parents in his infancy and who had ever since been the first object with all three ladies. As a child he had been a victim to every sort of ailment,—croup, measles, chickenpox, scarlet fever, and every form of cold. Thus it was the belief of all the ladies that he was extremely delicate in health. Every indication was watched, every symptom discussed. The slightest indisposition was regarded as of such seriousness that he had hardly been permitted to go from the sight of his protectresses. School or college had been considered out of the question for him. Not that his education had been neglected. Specialists of every description, B.A.'s, M.A.'s, and even Ph.D.'s had tutored him, coached him, and carried him through every sort of exam. He had had masters of music and dancing and in gymnastics. Money and will were not lacking, and Oliver, possessing, indeed, his share of clear intelligence, besides a nice sense of obligation to his family and society, had done his best to fit himself to inherit the family estates and to become the position. There had been sharp disappointment among the Van Voorsts when at Oliver Hunter's death everything had passed to his widow. Whether Jane Hunter, who had married John Van Voorst, showed affection or shrewdness when she named her son after her brother, the Van Voorst connection had always considered it a bid for a handsome legacy. And, indeed, Oliver Hunter had always seemed to have the interests of his namesake at heart. Certainly the Van Voorsts could hardly be said to be in need of money, but who that is rich is ever rich enough? The Van Voorsts were pining for more money, for money enough to have a town house, as well as this pleasant country home.

Oliver was by this time twenty-four years of age, fair, plump, pink and white, looking well fed and well groomed, with brown hair and serious eyes of no particular color. Trained to be docile and to accept all the decisions of his elders, he had so far contrived to get on without any particular ambition of his own. He was, indeed, rewarded for his amiable compliance in large matters by having the decision of smaller questions conceded to him. For example, when at breakfast Julius, the butler, would say the cook was waiting for orders for dinner, Mrs. Van Voorst would observe, "We must have a good dinner, tell

cook. Poor Mr. Oliver is not quite well to-day. What could you take, Ollie, dear? Shall we tell cook to have some of her nice white soup?" Oliver would accept a white soup, and suggest a salmon bisque. Then should it be beef,—a tender red fillet of beef? Oliver, however, did not care so much for beef nowadays. He liked something more delicate, a sweetbread, a croquette. The salad question was his too to decide, but what he gave his whole mind to was the choice of the sweets.

If Miss Sabrina was at times a little troubled by the thought that Oliver was almost too entirely under feminine influences, she reminded herself that he was at all events safe. At least until he should marry there could be no happiness in life for the dear boy like being enclosed with his aunts and grandmother in this sweet security. That the minds of all these ladies had accepted the bristling truth that not all their cares could keep Oliver heart-free, fixed forever in this virgin seclusion and sanctity, showed that they possessed some imagination, if not experience. What would happen when he did suddenly wake up was incalculable. Not wholly to deny him society of his own age, they had established a youthful intimacy between Oliver and Clara Frost, the daughter of a far-away cousin who lived a few miles up the river. They had begun to believe that perhaps Oliver was looking at Clara, was making up his mind. It was clear too that Clara saw it, and that she was behaving very nicely. The fact that this love-making had not yet gone beyond bounds was presently to be a subject of congratulation to certain of the ladies. But although Oliver had not gone beyond bounds, it was Miss Sabrina's belief that he had gone too far to go back.

News of Mrs. Oliver Hunter's sudden death in Paris had, of course, been received by Mrs. Van Voorst, and the probable disposition of her property had been discussed with no little feeling.

"Oliver Hunter's money," said Mrs. Van Voorst, with her little shriek, "the money that ought to have come to our own Ollie, and to whom has Laura Hunter left it? What relations has she? There is hardly a Fairlie in the world."

"George Fairlie left a daughter," suggested Mrs. Vanderweyer.

"And if George Fairlie left twenty daughters, what then? What right has any Fairlie to Oliver Hunter's money? I might say dear Ollie's money."

Mrs. Van Voorst, indeed, became so excited on the subject, that both her daughters were kept busy restoring her vinaigrette, her handkerchief, her eyeglasses.

"The idea of her having had all that money to leave just as she chose!" she exclaimed. "It makes my head turn round. Heaven knows, I never liked Oliver Hunter's wife, and unless she concealed her affection for me, I have reason to believe there was no love lost

between us! But it does set my teeth on edge to think of her dying and leaving all that money to anybody except our dear Ollie."

In spite of an occasional item in one of the evening papers to the effect that some question existed as to the disposal of the Hunter property, not a syllable which hinted at the real state of the case had reached Riverbend until a letter came from Mr. Beekman addressed to Oliver Van Voorst, stating his intention to call the next day, at ten o'clock, to make known the testamentary devises of the late Mrs. Oliver Hunter, Oliver Hunter Van Voorst being an interested party.

Accordingly, Mr. Beekman, after staying all night with his brother, who lived in the neighborhood, presented himself at Riverbend at the hour named next morning, and was ushered into the library, where the whole family was assembled. Mr. Beekman was not slow to discover the fact that the ladies were all in a quiver of the liveliest curiosity, while the young man sat placid, and if he had any emotions restrained them, hardly giving a sign of any particular interest. Although the lawyer had this wonderful secret up his sleeve, he had no air of finding enjoyment in his own role of conjurer. As he limply shook hands with Mrs. Van Voorst and her daughters, his face wore the most lachrymose expression. In choosing his seat, he discarded one chair after another, then, as if it were a mere choice between different instruments of torture, took one at hazard. Finally, sitting down, he coughed, shivered, fidgeted, requesting that the window behind him might be closed. Then in his feeblest, most depressed, most cracked voice, he went on to say that no other documentary evidence of the intentions of the late Mrs. Hunter in regard to the disposal of her estate real and personal remained except a will hastily executed some nine years before, of which the paper he now held in his hand was an attested copy. He then remarked that he would first recapitulate the terms of the will of the late Oliver Hunter, all whose property real and personal was left without restriction to his wife, except the ultimate disposal of some sixty thousand dollars, of which she was to have the income during her life, but which upon her death was to be divided among three charitable institutions, of which he had been a chief promoter. Everything else was to belong absolutely to her, to do with as she liked, and to leave as she would after her death. Nevertheless, in a letter of general instructions Mr. Hunter had given one hint concerning the distribution of the estate, which no child of his own had been born to inherit. He disliked to have his property divided. From his point of view it was so important a matter that the house on Madison Avenue should go with the income and the income with the house, that the question of the ultimate inheritance of the large property was worth some considerable attention.

Mr. Beekman's thin, piping voice had faltered more than once as

he spoke. His hearers exhibited surprise, except Oliver, who sat submissively waiting for some word of direction before he should take the trouble to show any interest.

"The paper I now hold in my hand," said Mr. Beekman, with sudden sharpness, "was drawn up by the widow's direction ten weeks after Mr. Hunter's death. She was very ill, and said to me, 'Let it all be as he wished. Have it as he said.' Now, what Oliver Hunter had said was this, 'Let your niece, Ethel Fairlie, marry my nephew, and if either one declines the arrangement, the whole property is to go to the other.'"

As Mr. Beekman uttered these words he adjusted his eyeglasses and was about to read out the document when he was interrupted by a series of shrieks from Mrs. Van Voorst.

"Her niece marry his nephew! His only nephew is Olly, our own dear Ollie. We will not let him marry that niece," she exclaimed.

In her excitement Mrs. Van Voorst had thrown down all her belongings, and now her handkerchief, her fan, her vinaigrette, and her eyeglasses all had to be looked for and restored.

Oliver had grown very red.

"If you will permit me to read out the will," said Mr. Beekman, impatient of the commotion he had raised, "then perhaps we may get——"

"Pray, continue," said Miss Sabrina. And she mounted guard on one side of her mother while Mrs. Vanderweyer took the other, for the old lady indeed seemed in an almost frantic state of mind.

The document was brief and to the point. If the two young people married, the whole property became theirs jointly. If either refused to accept the terms, the whole property was to pass to the other. That was all. Although hastily executed, it was valid and indisputable. Nothing essential was omitted. Mr. Beekman folded the paper and laid it down upon the table.

"Did anybody ever hear of such a will?" exclaimed Mrs. Van Voorst, with a little shriek. "I just ask you, Mr. Beekman, is my grandson to be at the mercy of a foolish will like that?"

It was, indeed, no easy matter for any one of the Van Voorsts to grasp the situation. Oliver's whole face expressed surprise, and, indeed, alarm. Indeed, it was an extraordinary will.

"Mrs. Hunter always intended that this will should be destroyed," said Mr. Beekman. "I blame myself more than I can express for not insisting that it should be destroyed."

"Yes," said Mrs. Van Voorst, with some emotion, "if the will had been destroyed everything would have come to our dear Ollie, as it should have done."

"On the contrary," said Mr. Beekman tartly, "everything would have gone to Miss Ethel Fairlie, Mrs. Hunter's only heir."

Mrs. Van Voorst's state of mind was, however, so dominated by her former state of mind that she could understand nothing clearly. It had been so monstrous that everything had been left to Oliver Hunter's widow, she was ready to expect more injustice even when fortune's wheel seemed to be coming in her direction. Mr. Beekman took the paper up and laid it down again. He rose and walked to the window, came back to the mantel-piece, looked at the portraits, trying to detach himself from the confusion, while Miss Sabrina and Mrs. Vanderweyer were making heroic efforts to bring the matter to their mother's comprehension. All he could clearly make out were the old lady's ejaculations,—

"Interloper!"

"Did anybody ever hear of such good fortune coming to a girl?"

"But Ollie's affections are already engaged! Ollie could never think of disappointing dear Clara!"

Unable to endure further intrusion upon the family party, and with a hasty mutter, "I will return again in half an hour, when Mrs. Van Voorst may have become more composed," Mr. Beekman beat a retreat. If it were possible to wring any concession out of them with a reference to Ethel Fairlie, he knew that he must act with great discretion. He must appeal to their sense of justice and kind feeling. This was no moment to dictate. The lawyer had listened in surprise to the suggestion of Oliver's affections being already engaged. He hoped it might open up some loophole of escape.

While Mr. Beekman descended the steps and walked up and down the terraces of the garden the four Van Voorsts were trying to grapple with this new idea. Oliver was the only one who seemed to take the situation coolly. His momentary alarm and anxiety had indeed developed into a state of smiling benignity, which gave him a little the aspect of a Buddhist deity. His two aunts had given him many an anxious glance, but found their whole attention demanded by Mrs. Van Voorst, who, as she grasped one point after another, was becoming more and more excited.

"Heaven knows I never loved the woman," she went on. "She went her way, we kept ours. She hardly knew us, and she never saw our dear Ollie. If she had seen him, she would never have thought of letting that interloper come in. All would have come to him."

"Well, thank Heaven!" said Miss Sabrina, "Oliver can afford to be disinterested."

"Disinterested?" exclaimed Mrs. Van Voorst, with another little shriek. "Disinterested! with such a property at stake! I have been in that house. It is full of pictures, silver, furniture, bric-a-brac, all beautiful and ready and waiting. Disinterested? You know nothing about it."



Miss Sabrina, too honest and too candid to care for expediency, and seeing symptoms of a dangerous tendency in her mother's state of mind, vainly endeavored to combat these views.

"But, of course, all that is nothing to our dear boy," she said. "This will seem very upsetting, but right is right and duty is duty. Ollie is above these sordid considerations, and he will be true to our dear Clara."

"True to Clara!" exclaimed Mrs. Van Voorst with a shriek. "Give up that fine house and all that money! What stuff! You know nothing about such things, Sabrina, nothing whatever."

"But, dear mother," put in Mrs. Vanderweyer, "Oliver never expected to have all that property."

"You know nothing about it, Amelia; you know nothing about it," said Mrs. Van Voorst. "It has caused me sleepless nights. I may well say sleepless. Such a brain as mine! I see too far into things. There I lie on my pillow, full of thoughts, reflections, insight! I never felt that Mrs. Hunter ought to be able to leave that property as she liked. It is I that have lived long; it is I that ever since I lost the best of husbands have had anxieties, responsibilities; it is I who have learned to be prudent!"

It was so evident that Mrs. Van Voorst was warming to the idea of the inheritance that Sabrina turned hopefully to Ollie, with whom, after all, lay the solution of the problem. She felt certain that Oliver would recoil from any idea of profiting by the will. He had been for many years becoming quietly attached to Clara, who, with a play of refinement and subtlety one could hardly have expected, had fitted herself into his habits and made him, indeed, almost dependent upon her. Oliver liked her to read to him. She played and sang to him. She talked to him just in the way that would interest him, and all his livelier companionship was rounded out at times by the comfortable silences which more than anything else show a real habit of sympathy and enjoyment. Yes, Miss Sabrina felt sure of Oliver.

"Of course, Ollie, dear," she now observed, "I know how you will feel."

Oliver turned uneasily in his chair. He did not speak, but he still smiled.

"It is a very singular will," Miss Sabrina proceeded, in a manner she had long found useful in forming and directing her nephew's turn of thought. "It was a mere temporary expedient. It was founded on an absurdity. Of course, it could not be expected to stand."

Oliver looked up at his aunt with some sudden intentness.

"All the real and personal property was left to you," Miss Sabrina went on, "provided you would marry Miss Fairlie. And in case you declined to marry Miss Fairlie, all the property real and personal goes to her."

"Yes, I understand," said Oliver.

"The whole thing is contrary to reason, to nature, to good taste," said Miss Sabrina with energy. "I am sure you think so, Ollie, dear."

"Yes, I think so," said Oliver.

Miss Sabrina, much encouraged, pursued her line of argument.

"And to have this money you will have to break faith with Clara, to whom we are all devotedly attached. It would be a dreadful thing to disappoint Clara."

Mrs. Van Voorst now broke in.

"If anybody is disappointed, I am disappointed; but facts are facts, and duty is duty. Clara is an excellent girl. I would stand up for her against anybody who said differently. Of course, the poor girl is plain, but that is not her fault. She would mend her looks if she could. We have seen Clara grow up. We know her and can trust her, but one has to look first one way and then the other. Of course, there may be drawbacks, but that house on Madison Avenue and ever so many thousand dollars a year are certainly a great compensation."

Oliver was smiling now more than ever. A sparkle had come into his eye.

"You will be true to Clara, dear boy, I am sure," said Miss Sabrina.

"But it would never do," said Mrs. Van Voorst with energy, "it would never do. I am Ollie's grandmother, and when anything touches my own flesh and blood I am all heart."

Miss Sabrina was much puzzled. She could not understand these subtleties. How could people help having straight, honest views of things?

"Of course, we are all thinking of Ollie's best welfare," she said.

"And when my heart speaks," continued Mrs. Van Voorst, dropping all her possessions at once, "my poor head gets quite confused. My ideas all run together. I understand nothing clearly. But let me simply say, as a matter of just observation of what has gone on under my own eyes, that dear Ollie is as innocent of any intentions towards Clara as a babe unborn."

"Oh my dear mother!" said Sabrina.

"One cannot have everything in this world," pursued Mrs. Van Voorst. "One wants soup, and one wants salt in one's soup, and occasionally there is a pinch too much. Still, a fact is a fact, and duty is duty, and one must eat one's soup, even if it is too salt."

Oliver was becoming too conscious of the importance of the moment not to feel somewhat overpowered. As he met the eyes of the three ladies all fixed on him, the smile on his lips gave way. The sparkle in his eye was quenched. He had even grown a little pale.

"He feels it," said Mrs. Vanderweyer with sympathy.

"Let him smell my vinaigrette, the dear boy," said Mrs. Van Voorst. "He is all heart. He is just like me. It is too much for him, and Heaven knows it is too much for me. These unexpected things ought not to happen. Before I was married I had six offers, and this is his first, for Clara does not really count."

"Clara does count," said Miss Sabrina, "and Oliver feels it, just as I knew he would. I cannot bear to blame you, dear mother, but don't you see how he revolts from the suggestion of marrying anybody but his dear, good, faithful Clara? You would not like to marry a strange girl, would you, Ollie, dear? You would rather take somebody you have known and can trust, somebody on whom you can depend, wouldn't you, Ollie?"

Oliver waited a moment. Then with some natural modesty he said, "I do not think Uncle Hunter's property ought to go out of the family."

"But, my dear boy," said Miss Sabrina, "think of the penalty affixed. You would have to marry a strange girl."

"But there is the property," said Oliver firmly.

Mrs. Van Voorst was wagging her head in triumph. "Of course, there is the property," she said.

"And perhaps," said Mrs. Vanderweyer, also going over to the other side, "who knows but that Ollie would like the chance of falling in love with a young and pretty girl? When one is young a little novelty does not come amiss. I have heard that Ethel Fairlie is very pretty and very clever. Should you like it, Ollie?"

"I should like it very much," said Oliver.

Miss Sabrina listened to all this talk with a feeling of bewilderment and humiliation. She had been used to walking within a small lighted circle, adhering rigidly to the path, not a little weary and worn, with a feeling that the imprisoning conditions of her life were imposed because she was a Van Voorst, and that to go on doing what the Van Voorsts had always done showed the highest good taste, besides the most admirable consistency. Her own sense of dignity made it seem impossible at first to yield; but before her rush of indignation had reached the point of passing into words, Mr. Beekman, who had been cooling off his own heated feelings in the garden and gathering courage for a new assault, came back to the open window, looked in, and, seeing everybody except Miss Sabrina (who rarely smiled) smiling, inquired if he might once more intrude.

"Intrude! What a word!" exclaimed Mrs. Van Voorst with her little shriek. "We were looking forward to your coming back directly. We rely on you so much. This is an affair of such delicacy. We need you. We have talked it over. We have consulted our dear boy's feelings. He has a heart, Mr. Beekman. He is like his grandmother there."

Mr. Beekman had returned to his chair by the table, where he sat fidgeting with the will, which he took up, unfolded, and refolded.

"Am I then to understand," he inquired cautiously, "that your grandson's affections are already fixed on,—did I understand the name aright?—Miss Clara Frost?"

"Clara! Heaven forbid!" cried Mrs. Van Voorst, bristling. "Why should you suggest such a thing, Mr. Beekman? Clara, indeed!"

Miss Sabrina now came forward.

"We have always expected our dear boy to marry some amiable and Christian young woman," she said guardedly. "I should like to ask a few questions about Miss Fairlie."

It was evident to Mr. Beekman that the scales had flown up on Clara's side. Ethel Fairlie was at present the weighty consideration. Much as he would have liked to overwhelm them with some thundering counterstroke, he could only answer the questions now put forth, each of which elicited a sparkle in Oliver's eyes and a curiously innocent smirk.

"The fellow gloats over the idea; he is smacking his lips," Mr. Beekman said to himself with ineffective rage. Perhaps he did try to interfuse into his account of Ethel some little suggestion of warning. If she were the prettiest girl he had ever seen in his life, still, her beauty was not equal to her wit; if she were warm-hearted and affectionate, still, there was a touch of temper, just the mustard in the salad, the pepper in the stew. He was glad to see the effect the information had upon the ladies. As to Oliver, he sat all the time smiling more and more broadly.

"I do not venture to promise," Mr. Beekman continued, "that if these two young people were to make up their minds to marry, your grandson would have the most obedient of wives, Mrs. Van Voorst, but perhaps the house on Madison Avenue with enough money to keep it up is some consideration."

As he said this he looked from one to the other of the group, and saw behind a variety of expressions the same meaning. The glittering bait was to be swallowed whole. Even Miss Sabrina was impelled to say, "Perhaps with good influences and with a sincere affection for our dear boy, the young woman——"

Mr. Beekman rose. He would endure it no longer.

"One thing I must say," he observed drily, "if the young fellow should fall in love with Miss Fairlie, as he could hardly help doing if he has a drop of blood in his veins, the question would still remain of her accepting him."

Mrs. Van Voorst raised both hands.

"What! give up the chance for such a property!"

While Miss Sabrina added jealously, "I feel that there could be little question of any young woman on earth rejecting our dear boy."

Mr. Beekman made a comprehensive gesture which waived all considerations of feeling.

"Before I go I will make one suggestion," he said. "I am not empowered to make it, but between old friends professional reserve may be banished. The whole estate being thus at will, such singular conditions attached to the inheritance, the matter lying wholly between these two heirs, I really feel as if some possible compromise might be found acceptable, some division which should wrong no one."

But the idea of a compromise brought no response from any member of the party. Consternation was apparent on every face. Mrs. Van Voorst ended a painful moment of suspense by exclaiming, after a little shriek, "But, Mr. Beekman, to divide is to spoil! Facts are facts, and duty is duty! Of course, we may say that we expected that the house on Madison Avenue and all the money ought to come to us without any drawback. Of course too, when I think of the strange girl, a girl whom we have not watched grow up, who has to be accepted along with the property, I might feel inclined to say to her, 'Take half the money and do not come to invade our happy household.' But after a long life one learns to be—prudent. I am old, and I am wise. Life is very—very—expensive. It is well to take all the money one can get."

"And it would be a pity to disappoint the poor girl," said Mrs. Vanderweyer. "Perhaps, Ollie, dear, you would like to have us send for her, so that you may see her before you fairly make up your own mind."

Oliver, who had followed the conversation with no little interest, now said, quite simply, "Yes, I should like it very much."

Mr. Beekman contrived to take his leave of the household without showing his real emotions. He had a feeling of having missed his aim,—indeed, of having gone wide of his mark.

#### IV.

NOTHING could seem more contradictory, incomprehensible, inconceivable, than for Mrs. Hunter to die and leave a will which broke every promise she had ever made to Ethel Fairlie. It was a strange answer to the letter which Ethel had written with a heart all love and belief, but in no moment of desolation and disappointment did Ethel fail to understand. Her letter, telling of her engagement to Basil Thorpe, had come to the poor woman as she lay dying. It had touched her hands, it had been pressed to her lips in those final moments of agonized consciousness. When the full news came to Ethel, what she felt was a longing to pierce that wall of death, to penetrate those dark labyrinths which separate mortals from immortality, to be able to tell

her aunt face to face that it was all comprehended, all forgiven. To have had her own trouble add one pang to that death-bed broke Ethel's heart.

Edward Bruce, the husband of her Cousin Fanny, in whose house Ethel was still staying when she had the news, might say, "This is what it is to be a woman." There are times when somebody ought to get into a rage, so Edward Bruce felt, and it was he who raged at the will left by Mrs. Hunter.

"But she never intended the will should stand," Fanny Bruce explained.

"Then why did she make the will?" Edward retorted.

Of course, it was explained that Mrs. Hunter had made the will just after Mr. Hunter's death, when she believed it to be her sacred duty to carry out his lightest wish. It is true that was nine years ago. Ethel from a child of fourteen had grown into a girl of twenty-three. Mrs. Hunter, from being comparatively indifferent to her niece, had come to love her as her own child.

"And why, in Heaven's name, as circumstances had changed, did she not change her will?" demanded Edward Bruce.

"Poor Mrs. Hunter was all the time trying to decide how much she ought to give to that dreadful young man," pleaded Fanny, impelled by irresistible intuition to make clear the motives of the dead woman. "She felt that since he was her husband's namesake he ought to have something. Indeed, she could not get over the feeling that her husband had suggested that he and Ethel should marry. Of course, I do not deny that she ought not to have put it off, but then she expected to live a great many years."

"I do not see why," said the inexorable Edward. "When a man is born into the world, just one thing is known about him, which is, that sooner or later he must die. Yet in spite of the fact that all created things are under the sentence of death, nothing surprises us so much as to have death threaten anyone we love—above all, ourselves."

"Besides," said Fanny tearfully, "she trusted partly to the logic of events."

"Logic of events is good!"

"Oliver Van Voorst might get engaged, he might get married," continued Fanny, "in which case she would have felt free to leave the property to Ethel, just putting the young man's name down for a suitable legacy."

"All that I can understand," said Edward; "but the fact remains that if Mrs. Hunter had destroyed the abominable will that she had made, then had made no other, every cent of her property would be Ethel's to-day."

A running commentary of ironic exclamations had accompanied Fanny Bruce's perusal of the letter. When she had finished it she scornfully flung it down.

"This is too much," she said. "Of course, you declined the invitation on the instant!"

"To decline is to decline all the Hunter property," said Ethel. "I shall decline nothing."

"Not decline to marry Oliver Van Voorst?"

"To decline Oliver Van Voorst is to decline all that rightfully belongs to me."

This colloquy had taken place between the two cousins as they stood face to face, each with a quickened glance and heightened color.

"If you go there you are offering yourself to this young man," said Fanny Bruce.

"I have written that they may expect me on the 18th," said Ethel.

There was something in the girl's manner not quite measurable to the older woman.

"I beg you to give up this mad scheme," she exclaimed with feeling. "It will bring you to grief."

"Bring me to grief! I have been through my grief. I am trying to pay the price of it without flinching and without tears," said Ethel.

"You must accept the inevitable."

"I will accept the inevitable. This is not inevitable."

"I cannot understand. You mean that you want this young man to fall in love with you."

Ethel's whole face broke into smiles and laughter. "Perhaps he will not fall in love with me," she said.

"Impossible! Every man falls in love with you!"

"But think of this young man so well brought up, fastidious by instinct and accustomed from his infancy to the highest standards."

"You will see, you will see," added Fanny. Then with intense earnestness of manner she went on, "I cannot bear to have my Ethel less noble than she has it in her power to be."

"I shall do nothing ignoble," said Ethel. "But if to be noble is to sit down and accept injustice, to have my whole life spoiled by it, I do not wish to be noble."

"It is Mrs. Hunter's will."

"Only by an unlucky accident. She has said to me a hundred times that almost all she possessed would ultimately be mine. It would not be her desire or wish that I should let it all go without a struggle. She would have wished me to use all my resources, and they shall be used."

At this moment came an interruption, an interruption which might easily have been foreseen, but which at this moment, when everything

was projected in imagination and nothing realized in achievement, startled Ethel sharply. In a panic she tried to run away. It was Basil Thorpe, who had come to see her. Twice he had come before and twice she had denied him access. But Basil Thorpe had his own share of determination. He recognized the fact that what he loved in Ethel comprehended this capacity for self-assertion, that it had, indeed, helped to establish her power over him. But now as he walked into the room he was not only himself capable of self-assertion, but possessed of a man's physical strength to enforce it, and he defeated her wish to escape by catching both of her hands in his. Thus holding her a prisoner he looked down into her face.

Ethel, feeling that his whole face asked a question, opened her lips to speak, but no sound came, and, finding her in this voiceless mood, Basil kissed her.

"No, no, no," she cried. She unlocked her hands and retreated. He followed her. Fanny Bruce had stolen away, and they were alone.

"I have thought it all out. I have decided for the best—indeed, for the only way," said Ethel in a supplicating voice. "Please accept my decision."

"Do you mean that our love is to come to nothing?"

They looked at each other for a moment in silence, then he went on. "Perhaps you remember that day by the seashore when I said to you: 'I love you. I shall never love any other woman, but you have a right to the widest choice. Here I am at your feet if you will deign to take me, but if you can love anybody better——' That was when I believed that you were to inherit your aunt's money, when I stood a little in awe of you as an heiress. Now you are mine irrevocably, Ethel. I want you to say, 'Basil, I will be your wife whenever you will take me.'"

"I shall not say it," replied Ethel with no little spirit. "As long as I believed myself to be rich I was quite willing to say it. As a poor girl, I cannot, I will not be your wife."

As their eyes met it was clear that there was behind each glance a strong will. He went on as if she had not spoken. "What I have come for to-day is to say, 'Marry me next week.' I am not rich and possibly I may never be rich. I have responsibilities, but responsibilities nerve the spirit of a man. I accept and will discharge my responsibilities."

Ethel drew back proudly.

"I see," she exclaimed, "my letter seemed to you a challenge to your generosity. I remember, if you do not, how you said——"

"I remember a thousand foolish things I uttered when things were in doubt between us. Now just one thing is absolute fact and absolute truth,—I want you for my wife. If we are poor, our very poverty will make the joy of existence keener, our love a more exquisite joy. Tell me it shall be so, Ethel."



She retreated with a gesture as if pushing him back with both her hands. It seemed impossible to stay near him and not look up, yet to look up would have been to show him too much; for at his words she was sweetly and powerfully thrilled.

"You do not see the light in which I look at my own actions," she now exclaimed. "It was certainly I who forced you against your will to tell me that you cared for me."

"Against my will? Much you know about my will. Until a man speaks, especially a man who feels that he is offering what is unequal, he has a thousand dubitations, but when he has spoken, and when he has had the answer he longs for, hesitations are at an end. You were to ask your aunt's permission for our engagement. Fate has returned this answer. I love you so well I could have accepted, at least for a time, a share of wealth to devote to your happiness. It would have been pleasant to live in luxury with you. That I will admit. But rather than not live with you at all, I would freeze with you, starve with you."

"Thank you. A girl who loves you will not let you freeze and starve on her account."

Basil laughed. "Luckily, there is no particular question of freezing or starving. I do not promise you the smoothest road in the world, but it shall be made as smooth as I can make it, and if we are together—Ethel, dear, I love you so that if I can say, 'Ethel is here whatever happens, you have Ethel, she is sure as heaven is sure,'—the hardest tasks will be easy."

Ethel had again retreated, had turned her back, had almost hidden herself. She remembered afterwards with a keen sense of mortification that for a moment his words, his voice, had moved her almost to helplessness. She had had to make an almost fierce clutch at herself, had had to tell herself anew that there are moments in life when we must not yield, when we must struggle if we would live. She had turned away that she might not meet his eyes, appealing, caressing, arraigning, and that he might not see the rush of blood to her face, that she was suffocated by a lump in her throat. Why could he not understand? Why could not everybody understand? It seemed to Ethel so simple, so natural, so inevitable, that she should decide on a certain course. When she finally turned back to him, although her color still came and went, she had regained her self-command, and said with a manner which had no little charm, but which had also a touch of audacity,—

"Let me explain that I am invited to Riverbend." As she said this there came a little smile in her eyes, the play of a dimple in her cheek. "I have accepted the invitation. I am to go on the 18th."

Basil meanwhile had not been growing cooler or more logical. The girl's attitude of revolt, her play of color, the glance of her eye, always

softer than her words, and the enigmatical smile on her lips suggesting that there was some subtlety of meaning behind her words to which he was not admitted, all these contradictions of her mood stirred his blood. At this announcement he stared blankly, ejaculating, "You are not in earnest?"

She felt his keen and angry eyes fixed upon her, but did not quail.

"I am absolutely in earnest."

"You, Ethel Fairlie, intend to offer yourself to that manikin?"

She did not cringe at the note of scorn in his voice, but made a little courtesy.

"I am obeying Aunt Laura's express wishes," she replied.

He made no answer in words, but before she understood his movement he had drawn her suddenly into his arms. For one moment she resisted, then with a little cry, made up half of laughter and half of tears, she hid her face on his breast and clung to him.

"Oh, you love me," he said, turned back her head, and kissed her.

She broke away, quivering from head to foot.

"I have to be rational. I have to be rational for us both," she exclaimed, "and you make it so hard."

"Rational? You are mine, and I am yours. That is rational. Everything else is irrational," he cried, laughing.

She ran back to him, took both his hands in hers, and looked up.

"Let us postpone happiness, say six months," she said.

Basil stared at her, honestly puzzled.

"Happiness is not the only thing in the world."

"Exactly."

"We are here simply to do what is right; not doing what is right, there is no enjoyment, no reward worth having. There are two many wrong things in the world already."

"What I am going to do is not wrong," repeated Ethel.

"So far as I can understand what you are going to do, it is monstrous. Tell me you will give up this idea of going to Riverbend."

An hour later Ethel could at least tell herself that the ordeal was over. She had persisted, and although she had felt that every declaration of her absolute need of doing this thing was weak, the weakest strand of all her logic had finally carried her over. Out of all his arguments and entreaties there remained a specific remembrance of this one speech of Basil's:

"I could give you up to a worthy fate, but not to this. To care for money beyond everything else! Hitherto you have agreed with me that although in this world money is a god, it is a false god, and that it is a duty to despise a false god. In your heart of hearts you despise this money. You despise the man too. I cannot believe that you will ever go to Riverbend."

It was then that she had supplicated, "I entreat you to spare me this—to go away."

"You insist that I shall go away?" he had demanded.

"Yes."

Basil had looked at her for one long minute, and then had gone away without another word.

V.

No place could be more delightful on a summer day than the piazza at Riverbend, with views of river and mountain beyond lawn and gardens. Here, as inside the house, all that could enhance comfort had been lavished on the equipment. There were tables of all shapes and sizes, chairs at every angle, divans heaped with rugs and cushions; and, to lend a touch of piquancy, a yellow and white Angora cat slept on its cushion on one side and on the other a fat Japanese pug, while from a gilt cage gleamed the brilliant colors of a parrot. These creatures—often, on drowsy, featureless days, the clowns and jesters who lightened the spirits of the Van Voorst household—were, however, forgotten on the afternoon of the 18th of June, for, as the three ladies sat waiting for their guest to arrive, each was experiencing with a thrill the feeling that fate was knocking at the door.

The carriage had been sent to the afternoon boat to meet Miss Fairlie, who might be expected at any moment. Mrs. Van Voorst's face showed interest but no anxiety. As she said, she was old, she knew the world, and had mastered its trick. Certain things had to be accepted. Mrs. Vanderweyer looked a little more alive than usual, evidently regarding the whole occasion with timid curiosity. It was Miss Sabrina whose whole face and features were charged with the tragic meaning of the situation.

"I always hoped she would decline," she said for the hundredth time.

"Decline!" said Mrs. Van Voorst with her little shriek. "What girl in her senses would decline? What could you expect?"

"It is a dreadful ordeal for the dear boy," Amelia suggested.

"I tell you, my dear, a man likes a little novelty, and I saw it in Ollie's eye at luncheon that he was excited. I ask you yourself, Sabrina, are you content to have the same dish for dinner every day? Don't you say one cannot dine forever upon mutton?"

Sabrina's whole being rose up in revolt against the introduction of these new and dangerous ideas. Mrs. Van Voorst's easy utterance of such a glaring heresy sounded to her ears positively immoral. It seemed impossible to arrive at any respectable attitude towards the new situation. Oliver had not committed himself beyond a prudent remark that it would be a pity to have the Hunter money go out of the family. But, nevertheless, the way he had turned the cold shoulder

to Clara ever since he had understood the terms of the will showed only too clearly in what direction the young man's mind had drifted. And now here was Mrs. Van Voorst comparing that excellent young creature to mutton.

"I tell you," continued the old lady, "that Ollie takes kindly to the idea of a new dish. Clara is very nice, but we have to confess that she is a little monotonous. I remember there was a distinct gleam in Ollie's eye."

"The dear, innocent boy just now called me into his room to ask my advice about the color of the necktie he should put on," said Amelia.

"What did you tell him?" inquired Miss Sabrina anxiously.

"Pale blue."

It really hurt Miss Sabrina's feelings that Oliver was to wear his most becoming color to please the eye of this strange girl.

"I wish he would not try to please her," she burst forth. "I hope he may dislike her. He is bound in honor to poor Clara, whose heart will break if he gives her up."

Day after day this same discussion had gone on to the point of tedium. Mrs. Van Voorst shrieked at the very name of Clara Frost. Facts were facts, and duty was duty. If Oliver gave up Ethel Fairlie, he gave up the Hunter property, and it would be so convenient for all the Van Voorsts to have just a little more money. Yes, it had to be accepted, but Miss Sabrina now took pains to observe, with no little acrimony, that it was their duty to make the ordeal as hard for Miss Fairlie as they knew how.

"I shall give her a great deal of good advice. Trust me," said Mrs. Van Voorst.

And Amelia put in, "We must impress upon her from the first that she is to enter into our family ways of thinking and doing things, and that, as Oliver's wife, she must become one of ourselves."

"Yes, we must take a firm stand," said Miss Sabrina.

Just as she said this she caught a glimpse of the carriage entering the grounds.

"There she is," she exclaimed.

"How I pity her," murmured Mrs. Vanderweyer. "The poor girl must be quaking and trembling."

Miss Sabrina looked as if she were saying to herself that it should not be her fault if the young lady did not quake and tremble to the very fibres of her soul.

Oliver came forth at the same moment. The blue necktie certainly suited him. So did, also, the touch of color on his face and the unusual light in his eyes. There ensued a little flurry of discussion as to whether he ought to rush forward and open the door of the carriage.

Mrs. Van Voorst and Amelia thought it would be graceful and lover-like.

"Always take the initiative, Ollie, dear," said the old lady. "Rush in boldly. Show her you are there!"

But Miss Sabrina objected. It would be a dangerous precedent, a sort of self-committal. And it has to be confessed that Oliver hung fire a little, and said it would be better if they were all to go together. This was clearly absurd.

What was to constitute the highest grace of a lover was not put to the test. The carriage had been seen at intervals in the many windings of the drive, but at the last turn, just where the avenue neared the end of the terrace, the coachman stopped the horses, and before anyone could ask what it was for, the door of the carriage was impatiently torn open, and out jumped a light figure, which set off towards the piazza at a brisk scamper, and a second later was tearing up the steps like a whirlwind. Could this be Miss Fairlie?

"Here I am, here I am!" she cried. "The moment I saw you all I felt that I could not sit still and wind around another serpentine turn. Oh, what a pull up that long hill! Such fat horses and such a fat driver! Ha, ha, ha! the moment my eyes fell on them I said to myself, 'They speak well for the good living that goes on in the house. I shall get as fat as a Strasburg goose.' But although I like good living, I warn everybody that that sort of quiet pace would never suit me. I love to go like the wind. What I longed to do was to put the fat coachman inside, where he could have his nap out comfortably, and take the ribbons myself. Hilly ho, hilly ho! How I should have liked to do it!"

All this had been delivered in a bright, clear voice and with animated gestures, as the apparition stood at the top of the steps, meeting four pairs of eyes focussed upon her. Not to create unnecessary subtleties, the reader must be assured that this was really Ethel Fairlie, but an Ethel so foreign to all hitherto received conceptions of her, that it was hardly to be wondered at that speculation and not welcome was shown in the glances she encountered. To begin with, she was fearfully and wonderfully arrayed, perhaps with a view to elicit more astonishment than admiration. Her hair, which was in hue of the most unmistakable red, hung over her shoulders in two long braids tied with plaid ribbon. Her eyes were concealed by blue spectacles. She wore a tailor-made gown of the most surprising plaid. Could anything be more hideous in the way of description? And yet it needs to be added that if this were intended as a sort of disguise, it somehow failed in the intention. Nothing could disguise her pretty figure or the contour of her face, and a certain grace carried off the grotesquery and left a novel and piquant impression. She paused to

take one look, then ran up to Mrs. Van Voorst and flung her arms around her.

"This is grannie, I am sure," she said. "I don't feel a bit afraid of you, as I do of the rest of them. You will feel for an orphan girl, won't you, grannie, dear?"

Mrs. Van Voorst had dropped her fan, her vinaigrette, all her belongings but her lorgnette, in sheer petrification of amazement, but the human touch, after all, assailed her sensibilities.

"Why, what a hug! Well, you are a warm-hearted little thing," she exclaimed.

"Here's another," said Ethel, "just like a bear's. You will be fond of me, won't you, grannie, dear?"

Mrs. Van Voorst was quite out of breath. It was sudden, it was unexpected, it was, in fact, making free with a great lady who represented two great families, but after all the great lady acknowledged to herself that there was something rather pleasant in the cordial clasp.

"Oh, what a child, what a foolish child it is!" she panted. "Oh, I'll be good to you, that is, if—if——"

Both Sabrina and Amelia, in a sort of alarm, seeing their mother thus taken possession of and carried off her feet, had come forward, and Ethel, turning, found herself face to face with them.

"Oh, here are the dear aunts," she exclaimed, falling as it chanced upon the neck of Amelia, who melted like Mrs. Van Voorst under the warmth and fragrance of the attack. It was all very well for Amelia to be kind, but Sabrina,—as Ethel turned to her she was met by features of ice and muscles as rigid as steel.

"I suppose," Sabrina said with all the stateliness she could assume, "that this is Miss Fairlie." She had repulsed the proffered caress. Ethel stood rebuffed.

"Why, I am Ethel, your own dear little Ethel," the girl cried, quite unabashed. "Ha, ha, ha, the idea of calling me Miss Fairlie! You are Aunt Sabrina. I suppose it is Aunt Sab for short. I should know you anywhere after your dear, delightful letter. How glad you must be that I am here at last. Now I want you all to like me; everybody always does."

There was in Miss Sabrina's face an expression of a storm gathering force, but before it could burst Ethel was off again.

"Where is Ollie? I thought I had a glimpse of Ollie as I crossed the lawn."

Mrs. Van Voorst held out her hand. "Come here, my dear," she said. "I will call my grandson and introduce you to him."

"Oh, but please, I would rather introduce myself," said Ethel, laughing. "I see him now hiding behind the screen."

This was the fact. Startled by the young lady's unexpected advent, perhaps daunted by the idea of a personal attack, Oliver had withdrawn step by step, until, reaching a friendly shelter, he had taken advantage of it, and had been watching the encounter with his grandmother and aunts through the chinks. Apparently he had flown to be pursued, for when Ethel peered around the screen at him she found him blushing and smiling, and he offered his hand at once.

"So this is Ollie," she said, taking his hand in hers and drawing him back into the full view of his natural guardians. "Were you afraid of me that you ran away? Surely you would not think of being afraid of your own Ethel?"

The opening scene of the drama was not lost upon the observers. Oliver, if a little coy and reluctant, and still blushing to the roots of his hair, was gazing at the girl's face as if fascinated. Again the aunts advanced—this time to save their nephew from going over to the enemy.

"This is Mr. Oliver Hunter Van Voorst, Miss Fairlie," said Miss Sabrina. "You will pardon our nephew if he is a trifle confused. We are all a little old-fashioned here, a little wedded to formalities."

As she spoke she put her hand upon her nephew as if to withdraw him from this strange and dangerous influence.

"Oh, formalities between Ollie and me are quite out of the question, aren't they, Ollie?" said the girl, laughing. And as Oliver gazed back with a slow smile lighting up his features, she went on, "And we young people do not need any introduction, do we, Ollie?"

And Oliver's smile still growing broader and broader, he shook his head in acquiescence with his gaze still fastened upon her.

Sabrina and Amelia could do nothing but retreat, for the two young people now seated themselves on one of the many cushioned benches which stood at convenient places on the veranda. Ethel was talking and Oliver's whole attention was riveted upon her. They had watched his love-affair with Clara Frost at its every stage. Oliver had taken his own time; he had swung round from an attitude of dead negation to a placid acceptance of her attentions. But at no moment had he ever looked at Clara as he was looking at Ethel Fairlie now. The ladies at a distance were able in whispers to compare notes on this inconceivably dreadful girl. Miss Sabrina was sure that Oliver must detest her.

"Detest her!" said Mrs. Van Voorst. "What stuff! You know nothing about such things, Sabrina, nothing in the world. The dear boy likes it. I see it in his eye."

It was time for afternoon tea. Julius brought out the round table, laid upon it the great silver salver, set forth with the old Dutch tea-set. This diversion had its uses. As Amelia lighted the lamp under the teakettle, Mrs. Van Voorst, rallying to the charge, waved her fan.

"Oliver, my dear boy, bring Miss Fairlie here. Old women have their rights."

It could be seen that Mrs. Van Voorst's "facts are facts, and duty is duty" offered an ideal for her to live up to. She held out her hand to Ethel, who ran across, followed by Oliver.

"Of course," pursued the old lady, "we must get well acquainted, my dear. Let me have a good look at you. You seem to be very happy at meeting Ollie and all the rest of us. Do you always have these high spirits?"

Ethel could only laugh irrepressibly as she looked down at the old lady, who was staring at her through her lorgnette, and who now went on: "You are really not so bad looking. But I should like to see you without those blue glasses."

Ethel held up both hands as if to shield herself.

"Oh, I could not possibly get on without my glasses," she exclaimed, all the time bubbling over with laughter. "Please do not ask me."

"Well, well, you are positively not so bad looking, even with them," said Mrs. Van Voorst. "Sit down here close beside me, and let us talk a little."

Ethel took the seat proffered her on the sofa piled with cushions.

"We are real chummy, grannie, dear, aren't we?" she said.

"What a droll word, 'chummy!' you and I!"

It was evident that Mrs. Van Voorst and Ethel were getting on very well, and when Oliver, feeling at a loss, tried to squeeze himself into the corner of the sofa, Mrs. Van Voorst ordered him away. "Oh, we cannot have you. Miss Fairlie and I need to get acquainted. I want to find out all about you, my dear. I hope you have been well brought up."

"I scrambled up somehow," Ethel confessed.

"I do hope you have a sweet temper."

"Cousin Fanny would tell you that I have a fairly good temper when I have my own way."

Mrs. Van Voorst shook her head. "Do you mean that you like to have your own way?"

"Oh, don't I like it, and don't I get it!" said Ethel, and then to Oliver, who, having planted his chair close beside her, followed her every word with an expression of absolute infatuation, "Don't you have your own way?"

"Sometimes," the young fellow replied guardedly.

Ethel gazed at him in apparent astonishment. "What, not always?" she asked.

"No, not always," he replied placidly. "It would not be good for me always to have my own way."



"The idea of not having one's own way!" exclaimed Ethel, utterly incredulous. "I will tell you how to do it. Let people find out that you are a terror if you are not suited, and they will give in directly."

The consternation which this speech imprinted on the faces of the three ladies was apparently not discernible to the wearer of the blue glasses, for she looked at one after the other, nodding saucily. "I know," she said with her little rippling laugh, "that Ollie will let me have my own way."

She looked at him as he reddened and laughed.

"You will let me do just as I like, won't you, Ollie, dear?"

Amelia had turned gratefully to the occupation of making tea, and only by a little flurry of manner showed that she was disturbed. Barricaded by the teacups, she could see what was going on between Mrs. Van Voorst, Ethel, and Oliver, how the girl was turning from one to the other, asking questions, making remarks, holding the ears and eyes of each, seeming to flaunt the subjugation of both with an insolence which would have been unbearable had it not been tempered by the radiance of youth and high spirit.

To Sabrina it was the most painful moment of her life, and it came home to her that it was probably only the beginning of such painful moments. She gazed at her mother with almost more surprise than at this strange interloper. Certainly Mrs. Van Voorst had never before seen such manners. To accept them and to follow where this girl led was to take a dangerous jump out of family traditions, a jump which, if Miss Sabrina had to follow, would be fatal. She said to herself, where would it all lead to?

Mrs. Van Voorst recognized, however, quite as much as her daughters that all the family traditions were endangered, but she had the gift of keeping the clue to the situation through the tangle. She could not forget, for it touched the sorest point in her consciousness, that to give up this young woman was to give up the property. She said to herself, "We must keep in touch, we must keep in touch."

"We shall all feel better when we have had a cup of tea," she now said to Ethel soothingly. "If one has a cup of tea at five o'clock, it seems to wind one up, don't you think so?"

Ethel waved away the cup that was offered to her. "Oh, stronger, please," she said to Amelia; "I will take the last of the pot. I like the blackest possible brew."

"That will do," she conceded, when with an air of aversion Amelia had poured out the very dregs. "No cream, two lumps, please, and two slices of lemon, and have you got any rum?"

This surprising question was put to Julius, who no doubt had his own share of the family astonishment, but who obediently whisked into the dining-room and brought out a cut-glass decanter.

Ethel took it from him. "Just a little wee bit of a tablespoonful," she said to Mrs. Van Voorst coaxingly. "It will warm the cockles of your dear old heart."

"Oh, what a droll idea!" said Mrs. Van Voorst. "As if the tea were not strong enough already! I have heard of such things! Just a drop to see what it is like. You must not bring too many innovations in. We do not like being shocked, but now just once, to see if it brings out the taste."

"I like it to go to my head," said Ethel, "and set my tongue going on a pivot. You must have some too, Ollie, dear. It goes to the head and makes one feel so comfortable."

Miss Sabrina's hostility towards the interloper having begun at the zenith, could hardly be said to increase at any stage of the manifestation; expecting, as she did, the worst that could happen, she ought logically to have been incapable of surprise, but Miss Sabrina's surprise was prodigious. Yes, prodigious is the word. The suggestion of heightening the effect of the cup that cheers by something that inebriates having been launched in defiance of every rule and canon, had been carried out by Julius so instantaneously as to prevent any murmur of dissent. But even if Miss Sabrina had time to dissent, she was too completely paralyzed to do more than look on in consternation, detaching herself from all responsibility. Nevertheless, in spite of all her emotions, Miss Sabrina was watching Ethel closely with the hostility and the intuition of a detective. Of one thing she became indignantly certain: the girl was acting a part, not a part that she had learned, but that she had to improvise as she went on, and that too with a constant bubbling over of not only laughter, but of some inner source of mirth that showed she was amused at finding herself in this new position. It was not only acting, but there was some effect of jugglery. She had called for the stimulant, but it was not into her own cup she poured it, but into Mrs. Van Voorst's and Oliver's. Oh, what a dangerous girl! For the added potency of that afternoon cup of tea was becoming, alas, only too apparent. A strange suggestion of hilarity was beginning to be perceptible in Mrs. Van Voorst's every word and look, a certain friskiness in all her movements. To Miss Sabrina's horror and confusion, this was the conversation proceeding in the little group: "What a sly little puss it was! Got around your old grannie at once! Give me another hug! Just like a sweet little bear! I begin to feel as if you really belonged to me. I even like the blue glasses."

All this was answered by that soft, irrepressible laughter of Ethel's, of which even Miss Sabrina felt the witchery. Really there was something alarmingly magnetic about the girl.

"If Ollie only likes them," she said, and Oliver replied with absolute ardor,—

"I like them very much."

Clearly the three were in a dangerous league. Mrs. Van Voorst called for another cup of tea, and was ready to rebel when obliged by her daughters to take it clear, arguing that a teaspoonful of rum did so bring out the flavor. She had never had any idea of it before. It had been this dear girl who had put her up to it.

"Oh, I'll put you up to all sorts of things," Ethel exclaimed on the instant.

The old lady wagged her head. "That's right," she said. "We needed you to wake us all up. I do like a little novelty. That is what I say. One does enjoy a new dish. One cannot live upon mutton forever. I see it in Ollie's eye. He too likes a little variety. Nothing like being young. Now when I was young——"

But just as Mrs. Van Voorst had embarked upon her reminiscences, and with these singular high spirits was ready to make all sorts of confidences, she suddenly, to Miss Sabrina's intense relief, dropped off into a light slumber. Sabrina and Amelia had looked at each other almost in despair. Hitherto this had been the home of virtue and respectability. They had lived hedged in by custom and tradition, but now in one moment, at this daring touch of innovation, all the edifice of family ideas seemed to crumble and totter. No guest before had ever entered the house except by the proper entrance, but this inconceivably dreadful girl had begun by jumping over all barriers, and at one bound had reached the very citadel. All was lost, indeed, if some effort were not made at once. Mrs. Van Voorst's little nap at least offered Sabrina an opportunity. She approached the group on the sofa with such obvious intention that Ethel sprang up as if to welcome her.

"Pray do not move, Miss Fairlie," said Sabrina with freezing coldness. "While mamma is resting I will put a few questions to you. It is so important that the situation should be understood."

Ethel's alert attention was given to Miss Sabrina on the instant.

"It is very important that everybody should understand," she said.

"But it seems to me," said Miss Sabrina, unable to repress a certain irritation, "that you do not quite understand. Considering the peculiar terms of Mrs. Hunter's very singular will, it seemed best that you and my nephew should meet."

"Oh, yes, indeed," said Ethel. "I felt anxious to come and find out everything about Ollie's tastes and habits."

Amelia, always anxious to round off all asperities, now struck in, "Of course, your wish is to mould yourself upon them."

"Oh, Ollie is sure to like everything I like," said Ethel, turning to him. "You will mould yourself upon my tastes and habits, won't you, Ollie?"

The young man smiled and nodded with the utmost complacency.

Ethel looked up at the two aunts with child-like simplicity and candor.

"The first thing we shall want is a pair of nice, new, frisky horses," she said.

Mrs. Van Voorst had gradually shaken off her drowsiness, and now uttered a little shriek. "Frisky! Frisky, did you say? Frisky new horses?"

Ethel faced straight about and went on with fresh animation.

"I like a nice, high-blooded animal, that plunges and prances and rears, and seems to long to throw one off his back. You will like a nice gallop before breakfast, won't you, Ollie?"

All Mrs. Van Voorst's alarms reasserted themselves on the instant. Had they guarded their precious boy all his life for this? She felt sure that Ethel knew nothing about what it was to be delicate. She pleaded with her that the dear boy's health had always been frail. A thousand dangers had been surmounted in his childhood. Every year of his life since he had been surrounded by the incessant care of those about him, who had watched him, hanging over him night and day.

"But I shall make a Spartan of him," continued Ethel. "Destiny has handed him over to me. You will see. Now I like everything that stirs my pulses, sets my nerves tingling. I like to feel that I am risking something. I shall teach him that pleasure is not pleasure without an element of danger in it."

With all her monstrous faults, something limpid, clear, captivating, carried them all along with her; in spite of the blue glasses and the hideous gown and cap, she was almost charming,—charming enough, at least, to hold Oliver under the spell. He listened enchanted.

"It is so nice to be young," the enchantress was saying to him, "to have life before us; to feel that the world is wide and days are long. It would bore me sadly if you did not like to do all that I do. Of course, you love a wheel. I have brought mine. Why shouldn't we take a spin together now?"

This was in the early days before all the world went on wheels.

Oliver confessed that he had once expressed a wish for a bicycle, but that his aunts considered them dangerous.

"Dangerous? Not a bit. I could not live without my wheel, and I could not certainly let you live without one. You will like to have me teach you."

Yes, Oliver said he would like it very much.

The conversation between the two had sunk into that tone of tête-à-tête which the others no longer had the courage to disturb. It was simply witchcraft. He listened as if hypnotized. There was talk of a high-wheeled cart with horses tugging at their bits, their muscles almost jumping out of their skins, as they tore on, seeming to drink in the

wind of their own speed. Then to be on the back of one of these spirited creatures, feeling underneath one the thrill of the whole powerful organism, trembling, curvetting, prancing, or galloping on with a mad rush. Still Ethel decided there was nothing quite equal to skimming the earth on a wheel. It was to find wings, it was the nearest thing to being a bird. Then, with that soft, caressing laughter, she asked, "Did you never long to be a bird, Ollie, and dart forth into the infinite blue?"

And the infatuated young man replied, "I should like it very much."

It was quite time to put an end to this mad folly, which would have been unbearable even if it had been something casual and accidental, instead of the beginning of a new and dreadful order of things.

The suggestion of a row on the river before breakfast the next morning was interrupted by Miss Sabrina's stern voice: "Our dear boy's rest is never broken, Miss Fairlie. His morning sleep is quite essential."

"That was before I came," said Ethel. "You will see, you will see. He will be glad to get up and go out with me. The day is never long enough for me. I often wish it was seventy-four hours long instead of twenty-four, don't you, Ollie?"

For once Oliver could not follow her, but confessed that he sometimes felt tired.

"Oh, you will never be tired any more," said Ethel. "I am never tired. I think I should never go to bed at all unless it were customary. I shall tap, oh, so softly, oh, so softly, at your door to-morrow."

Amelia now broke in, put her arm around Ethel, telling her it was time to go upstairs and rest a little before she dressed for dinner.

"Rest?" Ethel declared she was as fresh as a lark. She never rested. But, of course, it might be well to put on another frock if only to captivate Ollie. Then, with an arch glance through the blue glasses, she demanded, "Why don't you say you are captivated already?"

The echo came instantaneously, "I am captivated already."

"He improves," whispered Ethel to the ladies. "Don't you see that he improves? When I came he hardly dared look me in the face."

She was swept away by Amelia, and was met by Julius and the maid, who were carrying the visitor's wraps and bags to her room. Ethel followed them up the stairs, then presently the ladies heard that laugh they had begun to dread from the room above.

Oliver sank into the place left vacant by his captivator. He was smiling to himself. The three ladies resumed their own seats, and for a moment there was a heavy silence. This was broken by a groan from Mrs. Van Voorst.

"Oh, this will never do," she murmured pitifully. "This will never do."

"Of course it will never do," said Miss Sabrina with some sharpness. "I told you it would never do."

"Never, never, never in the world," said Amelia.

To be all three of this single state of mind, to be linked together against the common enemy, and then to see Oliver wholly taken possession of by that enemy could not be borne.

Mrs. Van Voorst rose, swept across the intervening space to her grandson, and said in a loud whisper, "She does not please me at all."

He still looked up, his whole sense under the thrill of something that had gone too deep to allow him to give ear to this whisper. Amelia followed her mother, murmuring, "She does not please me at all," and Miss Sabrina without changing her seat said aloud with tragic emphasis, "Ollie, she does not please us at all."

Oliver gazed back incredulous. "Why?" he said. "I like her. I like her very much."

"How can you like her?" demanded Miss Sabrina. "Just think of Clara. She is not at all like Clara."

"No, she is not at all like Clara," Oliver confessed cheerfully. "I like her a great deal better than Clara."

"But how can you like her?"

"It does not seem hard. She is so lively. She is livelier than Clara. Then she is prettier."

"Prettier with those blue spectacles!"

"I quite like the blue spectacles," said Oliver.

"I think," said Sabrina, "that the girl is absolutely dreadful, with her red hair, her whole shocking appearance, her bad manners, her calling for rum, her talking about horses like a groom."

"She entertains me very much," said Oliver quietly. "And then, aunt, you know there is always the question about the property."

Mrs. Van Voorst, after a moment of indignation and revolt, was once more brought back to realities.

"Just hear the wisdom of that boy," she said. "I always told you. Sabrina, that what Ollie does not know is not worth knowing. For a few minutes, while she was talking about mounting our dear boy on a horse, I felt that I hated the girl. My feelings carried me away, but Oliver is not carried away. He understands that the question of the property is the question. Not that self-seeking or interested motives could ever move him any more than they could move me. Ollie is capable of making a sacrifice. I am capable of making a sacrifice. But what, I ask you, would become of the poor girl? She is evidently in love with him. He feels that she is in love with him. See now how he is blushing!"

Ollie was blushing, and after all Miss Sabrina had to confess that the succession to the Hunter property was the question.

## VI.

ONCE in her own room Ethel naturally and inevitably looked in the glass at her own image. She had dismissed the maid. She had longed to be alone, and after one glance, deliberate, comprehensive, critical, at the figure in its plaid frock, the face disfigured by blue glasses, and the long braids of red hair surmounted by a cap, she took off the armor she had worn in battle, as it were, wrapped herself in a peignoir, and sat down.

Her nerves were all in a tremor. Once or twice laughter bubbled up. Again tears rose to her eyes and would have welled over, had she not forbade them. She had appointed herself a certain role and must play it out to the end, dismissing womanish sensibilities. A little clock of Dresden china had a place on the dressing-table, and she timed herself by it. She could afford just twenty minutes for thought. Then she must dress for the later ordeal of dinner and the evening to follow. She had at least made the plunge. Recalling now what she had felt as the carriage slowly approached the house, how courage had failed her, how panic had seized her, how her heart had hammered in her ears, a knot had tied itself in her throat, and she had wished the earth would open and swallow her, she realized what it was to have made that plunge and to have lived through it.

"Of course," she said, "I overdid it. Everything I had meant to say and do went out of my head." Catching a glimpse of the family on the piazza, the inspiration had seized her to stop the carriage, make a short cut, and throw herself into the very heart of the situation. That she had created anything like the effect she had needed to produce showed that she was capable of improvisation. She had tried all through the journey to shape her course in her own mind, but, of course, between what was real and what was imaginary had yawned a hiatus that her own wit had to fill up. At this moment the question of what was right and what was wrong did not assail Ethel, she simply accepted this as one of the triangles of life to which the proportions of things must be adjusted. Coerced by fate, this was just her one chance.

"I overdid the thing," she said to herself again. "But then it was not easy to go just so far and no farther."

Remembering those two potent cups of afternoon tea, her very heart quaked. It had been a trick unworthy of her, and yet mirth overcame her as it all came back to her mind, and Miss Sabrina, who happened at that very moment to be passing the door, heard a light rill of laughter and trembled.

Oh, that dreadful girl! Oh, that they had admitted such an enemy into the house!

Some emanation perhaps of that cold breath of disbelief reached Ethel, for as she stood once more facing the mirror, she said to herself for the third time: "Yes, I overdid the thing dreadfully. I must be cautious. Miss Sabrina will see through me. One must not underrate one's opponent."

She glanced about the charming room. Each dainty device, each touch of niceness, each prettiness of color and texture, made itself felt. Here everything was pure, sincere, thorough,—the best. She herself was the only sham, the only hypocrisy. In pure self-defence she had to save herself by her devotion and loyalty to the one prime object of her life, and she now nerved herself for the evening, saying, "It is all for Basil."

The next morning Ethel woke at dawn. She had gone to bed at eleven so utterly exhausted that she had fallen asleep the moment her head touched the pillow. Now perhaps a cooler puff of air betokening the coming of the day roused her instantly into a condition of intense wakefulness, yet of such overstrained faculty and sense in one direction that everything which had happened yesterday suddenly became invested with frightful vividness. It all seemed a hideous phantasm. She saw herself, heard herself, realized herself with a feeling as if lost to all that in her habitual sense of personal dignity she had hitherto held sweet and sacred. Her brain still partly under the bondage of sleep, what she experienced was a shuddering horror of having embarked on this contest.

She started up, crossed the room, threw open the shutters, and looked out to reassure herself. It was just the moment when the birds were waking, each with its chirp, its call, its beginning of song, all making a confused melody. The mountains standing high above the glimmering lower world, like an insurmountable barrier, while she looked suddenly took on a violet hue and grew aërial against the sky, which every moment became more and more rosy. In the northeast every lovely color melted and blended. The river, which had run darkling and opaque, became a track of rose and flame. The day was awake.

In that first moment of consciousness she had seen only one aspect of things; her pride, her delicacy, and, above all, her conscience were in arms. For that moment salvation lay only in renunciation of all her claims: sacrifice was nothing, death was nothing. To do wrong to the meanest soul alive and live on was the only evil. But all that belonged to the moment when things were only half seen and half heard. Now she felt the clear, imperative call from earth, sky, bird, and flower to be alive, to claim her part of the joy of existence. This supreme life to which she reached out was too large for such petty codes. Her belief in the justice of her own side was fortified with



every breath she drew. She must be the whole of herself, Ethel Fairlie. She must be perfectly honest with herself and not be brought up at every step by the question whether she ought to do this or that particular thing, but say bravely: "It may be what of all things I hate most to do, but it has somehow to get itself done. Life otherwise is impossible."

It was not quite five o'clock when not only Oliver but his grandmother and his aunts heard a tapping. It was a soft, but it was a disturbing sound. It kept on, and every now and then came a call, "Come, Ollie," followed by a little ripple of laughter. Next the voice and the laughter ascended from the terrace below, and five minutes later, incredible as it appeared to each of the ladies, Oliver's own voice also came up from the terrace with the fresh scents of the roses and honeysuckle. Each one tore herself from her bed and looked out just in time to see the young girl dart on with a look over her shoulder at the young fellow, and a cry, "Let's run." She had invited him to a chase down the wet lawn to the boat-house. The grass was, of course, dripping with dew. Not only Miss Sabrina, but Mrs. Van Voorst and Amelia, threw back the shutters and each shouted at the same moment,

"Ollie, have you got on your rubbers?" But he did not pause to hear.

Once on the river Oliver drew a deep breath of satisfaction. That voice of admonition about his rubbers had reached his well-trained consciousness, but at this moment something stronger than the voice of admonition drew him on. There had, it must be confessed, been a brief interval when, rudely snatched from slumber by that tapping, tapping at his chamber door, he would have let his Aunt Sabrina do her worst to get rid of this pernicious intruder upon his peace and comfort. But that persistent "Come, Ollie," and that soft, suggestive laughter, at first exasperating, then tantalizing, and at last alluring, drew him forth in the mood to be ready for that will-o'-the-wisp chase. Reaching the boat-house, Ethel had stood looking on, directing and ordering while he launched the skiff, not seeming to suspect that never before had such labors of Hercules been imposed upon him. For very shame he dared not tell her it was too heavy, and that to bring the big oars and set the tiller was ignominy. Indeed, something about that soft imperiousness, and her "Ollie, do this," and "Ollie, do that," not only compelled but gave him a bewitched sense of liking to obey her orders. A good deal of fog and haze in the young man's mind was beginning to clear up. He felt from head to foot that Ethel pleased him. For example, when she jumped into the boat it was like a bird. Clara invariably almost swamped the boat when she got in. It was true that Clara liked to take the oars and often did far more than her share of the work. At this moment, however, the air was a little cool

on the river, and although they were going upstream the tide was with them and the wind behind them, so that he felt the exercise refreshing. The morning was so beautiful that Ethel, as she sat in the stern with the tiller rope in her hand, almost forgot herself, smitten by the wonder of it, moved by the glory of it. For in this early morning light the scenery on both sides of the river looked wild and strange. The mountain tops which met the moving skies were some of them still wrapped in mist, while others absorbed the rosy and golden light. Now and then the sun, like a ball of living flame, was seen through an open vista, and glittering meshes of its light burned across the river. Then it was all lost sight of, save for the radiance on the silent domes and peaks. In the ravines and gorges, with their thickets and mosses and plummy bunches of fern, it seemed almost night still. But blue-jays flashed in and out of the sleeping forest, and kingfishers darted, showing that the morning was alive to them. In one place a rivulet came tossing down from the heights and fell from shelf to shelf. There was a pine hanging on the very verge of the cliff. Ethel, carried out of herself, forgot who she was or why she was there. Her own individual hopes and needs were merged in the universal. A rosy cloud floating across the violet mountain-top was enough for her. She let everything else go. If Oliver had not quite the imagination to follow all her flights of fancy, still he was swept quite away from his usual anchorage. So far in life he had found everything measurable. Ethel opened a new region of ideas altogether. He was surprised at his own keen enjoyment of the early morning freshness, of the sense of remoteness and aloofness. He too felt himself a part of the irresistible movement of things, the flowing water, the mountain cloud, the sighing wind, and when Ethel exclaimed over her joy, he echoed,—

“Yes, I like it very much.”

He listened half in delight, half in expectation when she told him of living in a houseboat on the Norfolk Broads, of climbing on the Alps, entering Venice from the sea at dawn. Still, after a while his hands began to feel the unaccustomed toil. “Shall we turn back?” he asked.

“Turn back? I feel as if I wanted to go on forever,” said Ethel.

That was all very well, but what Oliver felt was a crick in his neck. The sun was mounting higher, and the early morning freshness and coolness had already vanished. He particularly hated to get overheated, and the increasing warmth assailed him at each lift of the oar. Still, like some fluttering winged creature, Ethel seemed to fly on before him and beckon, and he had to keep up the chase.

It was long past seven o'clock before she consented to let him turn. They were eight miles from home. Instead of their being the only things afloat on the rose and pearl expanse of water, the river was now alive with steamboats, ferryboats, barges, and tugs. Danger lurked

at every turn. It needed both pairs of eyes to keep a look-out lest they should be run down by some of the river craft. But, alas! it must be recounted of Ethel that she deserted her post; the tiller rope dropped from her hands; she coiled up and slept like a kitten.

We may as well draw a veil over Oliver's sufferings as he sadly rowed towards home. Obligated to look three ways at once, he could not get on rapidly, and although his course was downstream the tide was still running up. Different emotions contended in the young man's mind. His early morning mood of reckless joy in following Ethel through all her bewildering caprices was modified. He thought of Clara Frost. Clara would never have led him this dance.

About two miles from Riverbend he was rescued by Timothy, the gardener's boy, who had been sent out in search of the runaways. Indeed, what agonies of mind had not the ladies been forced to suffer through all these hours! At first Mrs. Van Voorst had said, "Oh, a little variety will do him good." Ethel had sung to her the night before and had quite captured the old lady's heart. But as the morning hours wore on since Ethel had murdered sleep, all other feelings were swallowed up in alarm, and the "nice, talented young creature" once more became to Mrs. Van Voorst, as to her daughters, a dangerous and revolutionary element. Breakfast had been waiting an hour when the culprits made their appearance,—Oliver scorched with sunburn, the palms of his hands blistered, at a loss to account for himself; Ethel not in the least at a loss, but full of admirable candor over their exploit; taking it for granted that this kind of escapade was to happen every day, that her own mad freaks were to be the rule of the household. In spite of his blisters and sunburn, however, Oliver ate so huge a breakfast, the ladies might have been reassured, if only Ethel would have permitted him to rest afterwards. Rest, however, did not belong to Ethel's scheme of things. She brought out her camera, and Oliver was led hither and thither all over the place trying to decide on the most effective points of view, the best lights and shadows. In fact, for the next two days Oliver was monopolized, worried, tormented—in short, bewitched without consideration and without scruple. If any occupation were put down for a moment, another was taken up. When Ethel herself was too exhausted to attempt more, Oliver was ordered to read to her.

"She is a very dangerous girl," Miss Sabrina would say. Inconsistency was not one of Miss Sabrina's weaknesses,—she had said it when she first met Ethel, she had said it every hour that the girl had been in the house since. Mrs. Van Voorst might change her mind every five minutes, but Miss Sabrina stood firm. All three ladies looked on at the little drama progressing under their eyes, watching every move, discussing the signs, analyzing the motives of each actor. Did

Ollie really like Miss Fairlie, or was it that duty triumphed over his inclinations? Could this girl have changed him in the twinkling of an eye, overturned his dearest habits, contravened his most cherished ideas? Hitherto he had detested everything that had disturbed his repose in the morning; of all things he disliked to be exposed to the hot sun. All these were no mere tastes and preferences, but ineradicable instincts.

"He seems no longer to have any will of his own," Miss Sabrina argued. "Where she beckons he follows. She has made him send for one of those horrid wheels. She is like a highwayman, bidding us all stand and deliver." And the ladies all trembled together.

It need hardly be said that the row of cut-glass decanters set out simply in order to preserve the old-fashioned generous traditions of the house had been swept off the sideboard in the dining-room and locked up. Miss Sabrina could at least insure the family against the return of certain dangers. Then without consultation with the others she had sent for Clara Frost to come for a week's visit. Clara's quiet presence might have its effect in restoring the old level of ideas.

Alas for Clara, she arrived at a bad moment for her peace of mind. She was used to the house. She was known to be amiable and to dislike giving trouble to servants, so she was permitted to make her way to the piazza. At the first glimpse the place seemed empty except for the sleeping pug and Angora and for the parrot hanging on his perch head downward. Another glance, however, showed Mrs. Van Voorst and her daughters lurking behind the screen and watching the scene being enacted on the terrace steps. Whether this audience was suspected or unsuspected, it certainly seemed as if Ethel were acting her part with too much spirit to be content with an audience of one. She was sitting on the top step. The afternoon was warm. She wore a loose white frock, belted in by a sash of green ribbon with a huge bow. Another green ribbon was knotted at her throat. The blue glasses made a displeasing contrast of color; but no matter,—Ethel was at that moment far from being as ugly as she hoped to be. In her hand she carried a little bamboo stick which she had picked up somewhere and with which she was clipping the air. Ollie sat two steps below her and was gazing up with fatuous admiration. Poor Clara, whose own bribes for Oliver's ardor had been met with such freezing response, now had to look on and listen.

"Don't stop,—please tell me what sort of man you could be in love with," he pleaded.

"He must detest indolence, ease, luxury. He must love to deny himself," said Ethel, with the usual ripple of low laughter.

"I am sure I have got up all these days at five o'clock," said Oliver, fairly glowing with hope.

"He must be unceasingly active; he must have something to do every minute of the day."

"Don't I?"

"He must be an adept in all manly pursuits. He must ride the bicycle."

"Well, as soon as mine comes, you have promised to teach me."

"Ethel's gaze had wandered, and her interest seemed to flag for a moment.

"Yes, yes," she murmured, as if out of a reverie.

"How must he look?" Oliver now demanded with the tone of one whose ear is unsatisfied with hearing, who must know all.

"He? Who?" she said dreamily.

"We are talking about the man you could be in love with," said Oliver reproachfully.

Ethel pulled herself together. "He must be very handsome," she insisted.

"I hope, I hope you do not altogether dislike my looks," Oliver murmured modestly. He seemed inclined to press a little closer to her, but Ethel waved him off with her rod of bamboo.

"Perhaps," she said, "something might be done to improve you." As she spoke she lifted her stick to his hair and ran a parting through the middle. "I fancy," she said, "it is your hair I don't like."

He pondered this statement a moment in silence.

"I hope you don't want it cut off?"

"No, I am no Delilah. There,"—she had succeeded in running the parting through the middle,—“there, that is better, only it looks so flat. If the ends could be curled.”

Oliver brightened. "Should you like it better if I curled the ends?"

"Vastly."

"I've got irons. I'll have Julius do it to-morrow."

"To-morrow! How am I to wait till to-morrow? I must have it done this very moment."

Oliver set off on the instant.

Was there ever such a coquettish, frivolous, heartless girl, the ladies said to each other, emerging from their retreat, for no sooner had Oliver vanished than Ethel herself jumped up, ran down the steps, and frisked up the garden path, switching with her cane at the tall plants until she vanished into the shade of the pergola. Clara also now advanced, and as Mrs. Van Voorst was taking her chair, meekly brought a footstool and adjusted it under the old lady's feet.

"Why, Clara, you here!" said Mrs. Van Voorst, with her little shriek. "Sabrina, here is Clara."

A momentary embarrassment showed in the little group. Mrs. Van Voorst carried it off. "It is very nice of you to come, my good girl,

you are quite one of the family. What is our pleasure is your pleasure. You were curious to see our dear boy's fiancée. Very natural."

"I invited Clara to come," said Miss Sabrina impressively. "I think, mother, you ought not to announce it as an engagement in that confident way." Then she gave a kind but characteristically cool hand-shake to Clara as she observed, "The young woman is here on approbation, as it were. We are to decide whether we think her really worthy of Oliver."

Clara bore the difficult moment well. She was pale and colorless, but had a kind, pleasant face, with blue eyes slightly protruding, which seemed to express a sort of surprise. Other expression of her feeling she did not often give. Her role in life was to accept what the passing moment brought and to wait patiently.

"I am quite sure you approve, Miss Sabrina," was the remark she now offered. "I am quite sure you are all charmed. Such a beautiful young lady, who will make you all so happy."

Nobody could possibly suspect Clara of irony, and even if disconcerted for a moment Mrs. Van Voorst soon rallied. "You shall see her. You shall see her, my dear Clara. A talented girl, full of spirits. She sings delightfully. She wakes us all up. We needed a little rousing."

"I think," said Mrs. Vanderweyer, "that she is a little too much elated, a little too happy. I wish we could tone her down."

"Tone her down!" said Mrs. Van Voorst. "The sense of her position will have a sobering effect as soon as she is used to it."

"There they are!" Clara now said, and her eyes seemed to be starting from her head. "Oh, was ever anything so dreadful! Ollie's hair is frizzled like a lapdog's."

This was indeed the shocking truth. Ethel, emerging from the arbor, had met Oliver, and they could hear her laughter peal out on the summer air. No words could be audible at such a distance, but the whole pantomime was so expressive, the spectators on the piazza could hardly be at a loss. Oliver's attitude of modest self-congratulation told the whole story of his thralldom. Ethel's critical pose, with her head a little on one side, was equally clear as she studied the effect, and with her stick gave a touch here and there to the curls which adorned the young man's temples. Mrs. Van Voorst uttered her little shriek.

"A lapdog is the word! Oh, that I should ever live to see my grandson look like a lapdog."

"She tries to make him absurd," cried Miss Sabrina, giving expression to her wrath. "She tries to make us all absurd. You would never have let Oliver lower his dignity, Clara."

"I should certainly never have asked Oliver to frizzle his hair," said Clara with feeling.

"No, indeed," said Mrs. Van Voorst, "you would never have asked Oliver to frizzle his hair, and he would never have done it if you had. You are a good girl, Clara, but no man would ever make a fool of himself on your account."

"I should not wish him to do so," said Clara with that meekness which disarms resentment, and at the same time that self-righteousness which rouses irritation.

"But I tell you," proceeded Mrs. Van Voorst, "that to be made a fool of is what men like. Ollie likes it. I see it in his eye. He would rather be ordered about by this girl than to have you put cushions under him."

All four ladies kept their eyes fixed on the pantomime progressing in the garden. Clearly in some essential particular Oliver did not yet pass muster. Ethel looked at him from one point of view, then from another. Finally, some decision having been arrived at, the young man set off at a lively pace, probably taking the shortest cut to his own room through the side entrance. Ethel, as if unconscious of observation and cutting the air with her cane, came slowly down the walk and ascended the steps, meeting the eyes fixed upon her with a curiously innocent look of astonishment.

"Oh, grannie, dear," she cried, "did you see Ollie?"

Mrs. Van Voorst uttered a little shriek. "I saw my grandson, Miss Fairlie. Let me tell you, it displeased me particularly."

Ethel raised both hands. "Displeased? Do you mean his hair? Didn't you like it, Aunt Sab?" she inquired, looking at Miss Sabrina, who declined to answer any such question. It was Amelia who replied with all the hauteur she could put into her words,—

"It displeased us all particularly, Miss Fairlie."

"Why, it seemed to me to improve him," said Ethel cheerfully. "I confess I was not quite satisfied with his looks, so I sent him to put on a different necktie."

Observing three heads high in air at this remark, Ethel adjusted her blue glasses and went up to Clara Frost, who alone was looking at her with interest and curiosity. "Is this a new relation?" she inquired, holding out her hand. "I am Ethel Fairlie. I suppose the reason my grandmother and aunts do not introduce me is because I am a member of the family now and can speak for myself."

The ladies, thus recalled to their good manners, each took pains to explain to Ethel that Clara was an old and valued friend, whom they had loved and known for years. Clara, who never in her life had heard herself so praised, her qualities of heart and mind so held up to admiration, shook hands timidly with Ethel, as if afraid of such a dangerous wild creature.

"I am sure we shall get along capitally," said Ethel, grasping

both Clara's hands and looking into her face. "They say you are so good and patient. Nobody ever calls me good. I am like a cat, well enough if rubbed the right way, but rubbed the wrong, all grip and claws. It is our opposites that charm us, so I am sure you will like me, Clara. Ollie has spoken to me about you. He says you have always been so good to him. I tell him you have spoiled him. I don't spoil him. Were you ever engaged, Clara?"

Clara had blushed all colors during this speech. "That is a very singular question," she faltered, withdrawing herself from Ethel's firm clasp.

"I was only asking in a general way, to know if you had had any experience. I'll give you mine. Never pamper a man. Never make things easy for him. Either you rule him or he rules you."

"If I loved a man, I should expect to honor and obey," said Clara with admirable sweetness and candor.

"I think it is the man who ought to obey," Ethel retorted. "Here he comes. Doesn't he look like an angel with his dear little frizzles and his red necktie, as if he ought to have wings growing under his chin?"

She ran towards him. They saw her switch him playfully with her cane. They actually heard her say, "Now, you dear old goose, run and get the camera, and we'll take some more pictures."

## VII.

"Now, I should have said," observed Mr. Beekman in his slow, cautious way, "that Miss Fairlie was rather a pleasing girl. Plenty of spirit, of course, but if there is a touch of temper here it is atoned for by a touch of tenderness there."

Mr. Beekman, who was again staying in the neighborhood, had come over to pay his respects to Mrs. Van Voorst and her daughters, and possibly also with a desire to pick up some crumbs of knowledge of the present situation, for it is not to be supposed that the sun stood still to watch the drama now in progress. Ethel's line of conduct had stirred no little feeling, roused no little apprehension. It may be that some wish of Basil Thorpe's was behind this visit of Mr. Beekman's. The lawyer had walked over a little before noon, perhaps counting on the hospitable ways of the house and an invitation to luncheon. He had found Mrs. Van Voorst and the other ladies sitting on the piazza. They had told him that the young people had gone up to take snap-shots from the hills.

"In spite of all the heat. And it was our dear boy who had to carry the camera!" said Miss Sabrina in a voice choked with feeling. "He has become a perfect beast of burden."

"Do him good, do him good," said Mr. Beekman. "It is well for a man to bear the yoke in his youth."



"Clara Frost would have helped him," said Amelia. "Clara always has so much sympathy for our dear boy."

"How about Miss Fairlie? Does she feel for him?" Mr. Beekman now inquired. He was answered by a trio of voices. Miss Fairlie feel for him! She was insanely in love with him. She could not live without him. It was "Ollie, come here," "Ollie, go there."

"And does he follow?" was Mr. Beekman's next question. Alas, they had to assent.

Oliver actually seemed to be hypnotized by this strange, elfish creature. She left him no free play. The house was turned upside down with her caprices. She could neither rest herself, nor let others rest. She could do nothing comfortably. She was not satisfied to have meals in the dining-room. She must have breakfast on the terrace, luncheon on the north veranda, and dinner on the south. The first day she came she had insisted on putting rum in her tea. She had made Oliver frizzle his hair. She called him a dear old goose, and when Mrs. Van Voorst had expostulated on having her grandson called a goose, she had replied, "But he is my dear old goose who lays golden eggs."

Mr. Beekman listened aghast. He could not question the veracity of the ladies. Their earnestness was only too genuine, also the soupçon of bitterness behind the words.

"Mercenary creature!" said Miss Sabrina, "I suppose she was alluding to the property."

"It is very hard to keep up with a woman," murmured Mr. Beekman.

"It is a terrible humiliation," said Mrs. Van Voorst. "Heaven knows the whole thing is contrary to my wishes. A goose that lays golden eggs! My grandson! Did anybody ever hear of a young man of family being called such a thing. I could not endure it at all except that facts are facts, and duty is duty, and that it is necessary to think about the property."

Mr. Beekman being invited to stay to luncheon accepted demurely, asking presently to be allowed to take a walk in the garden and see the flowers. He was eagerly alert for the return of the protographing party. He had listened without clearly comprehending to the account of Ethel. He had taken nothing in. He was not a man to jump at conclusions. He wanted time to think, to reduce the points of evidence to logical order. He tried to go over the facts of the case, but it was so hard to seize a fact. Each seemed to slip elusively from his fingers and perched itself up contradictorily, bringing all his conclusions to naught. While he walked up one path and down another, stopping first at a white blossom and then at a pink one, as if in the hope of finding a lost scent, he was reviewing the case, rehearsing to

himself a half-forgotten conversation with Mrs. Hunter on the subject of that will which she could never bring up her mind to make. If he could but have made her act with decision and good sense, divide the property between the two young people, and dismiss forever that fiction which seemed to have taken possession of Oliver Hunter's mind that his estate ought to continue intact, and that, like the heirs of Aragon and Castile, his nephew and his wife's niece should consolidate their claims!

"That's the devilish mischief of it," Mr. Beekman said to himself. "A man is not content with having his money in this life, he wants to go on taking care of it after he is dead."

These reflections, natural and inevitable in the mind of a family lawyer, were suddenly dispelled by the sound of a laugh, which he unmistakably recognized as Ethel Fairlie's. Turning, he saw the three young people coming down the slope, and, looking, lost himself in wonder. He had heard Ethel's voice distinctly. She was saying, "There, Ollie, put it down. No, not there, about twenty feet to the right. Do you call that the right? Then I mean to the left. There now, see if it composes well. Does it take in a bit of the view?"

All this thrilled along the garden walks, along with bird-notes and other summer sounds. There was Oliver, his head inside the curtain of the camera. There was Clara Frost looking on in surprise. But where was Ethel? The voice was Ethel's, the ripple of soft laughter was Ethel's, but Mr. Beekman gazed stupefied at the figure from which the voice proceeded.

"Now," she said, "I will go and take my stand by the arbor."

As she said this she came flying down the garden path. Not to give her too great a shock of surprise, Mr. Beekman slipped behind a clump of syringas and waited. Then as she faced around at the door of the arbor he said in his driest manner, "How do you do, Miss Fairlie?"

She stopped short, as if spellbound, but after a moment of some intensity held out her hand. What she said was uttered in her lowest voice. "I beg of you to be my friend, Mr. Beekman. Stand by me." Then aloud: "They are taking my picture, and I am to pose against the rose arbor."

Mr. Beekman effaced himself while the picture was in progress. The moment the slide was down, Ethel gave Oliver what was perhaps a not wholly unwelcome signal of release. Here was Mr. Beekman, she said, to whom she longed to talk, and with whom she must talk, and Oliver and Miss Frost might indulge themselves as they chose by taking pictures of each other. Having thus cleared up the situation, Ethel turned to Mr. Beekman. He meanwhile had been taking in all the bizarre features of the extraordinary change he saw in the girl. Her hair drawn off her face, frizzled, and then braided, seemed to him

not only dressed in some unusual way, but to show some unusual color. Let him rub his glasses as he might, it was unmistakably red. Twice he had taken them off and twice he had put them on, and the clearer his gaze the redder was her hair. Then the blue glasses. Blue glasses! Being a man, he could not precisely describe the changes she had made in her dress, but it appeared as if in some inscrutable way color was where it ought not to be, that things were scant where they ought to be bunched and bunched where they ought to be scant. On one point his mind was, however, quite made up—the skirt was too short. After bearing a moment of this intense scrutiny, Ethel could endure it no more. “As I said before,” she murmured, “I beg you to have faith in me.”

“Faith in you? My dear young lady, faith in you?” Again Mr. Beekman took off his glasses, rubbed them, and looked at her. “I seem to know the voice,” he went on, “but surely everything else is confusing and misleading. Is this Miss Ethel Fairlie?”

“It is Ethel Fairlie,” she said softly, but her whole manner showed that she felt the chill of his own.

“But why this masquerading?” he demanded.

“I asked you to have faith in me,” she persisted.

“Faith in Ethel Fairlie? I should have been willing to pin my faith on Ethel Fairlie,” said Mr. Beekman. “Ethel Fairlie’s face showed all that was charming in her nature. I should have trusted to her every instinct being noble, to her being incapable of the least subterfuge. Ethel Fairlie has always been the ideal of the girl I should like for my sister or my daughter or my wife.”

Mr. Beekman stopped short, to give almost a snort of disappointment at this lessening of all his ideals. “I do not understand this at all,” he went on in lame and impotent conclusion, and bending forward, wiping his glasses, he gazed into this counterfeit Ethel Fairlie’s face as if in search of some clue he might follow up. He was more and more conscious of there being something behind all this, but he could not make it out.

“Can it be,” he now asked in a tone as if driven to this desperate if obvious climax, “that you really desire to make the marriage appointed by that senseless will?”

“You made the will,” Ethel murmured in soft retort, with a manner that came with a surprise to Mr. Beekman, it seemed so light-hearted in its mischievousness.

“Under protest, under protest. I wish to Heaven I had burned it up,” said Mr. Beekman. But it was curious how some sudden insight seemed to run ahead of his knowledge, and how the moment Ethel began to be like her old self he began to believe in her once more.

“What have they told you about me?” she now asked.

"All sorts of things," said Mr. Beekman with fresh indignation. "They made it seem to me that in order to get hold of your aunt's money you were giving up everything that had hitherto seemed to you worth having."

She raised her head, she sprang up, she came a step nearer him.

"Did you not just say," she whispered, "that the will was senseless?"

"Absolutely senseless."

"If the will is senseless, I am not senseless," she said, still in that low voice, but kindling and throwing all her heart into her speech. "Am I to sit down and accept it submissively with folded hands? Is not life given us to make the most of? Am I a woman to have a wish without a beat of the heart behind it?"

He looked at her a moment in silence. "I am a hardened lawyer," he said, "and know that against a legal instrument duly signed and witnessed, a man's heart and a woman's wish are equally powerless."

She went on. "If the will were anything except an absurd mistake, if there were any real call for sacrifice, if anything of honor or justice or reason were concerned in the situation, I could give it all up. As it is, Aunt Laura would never have wished that I should feebly give up all that she meant me to have."

Mr. Beekman was more and more stirred. More and more he realized that even in this disguise Ethel was too alluring and too beguiling to be easily resisted.

"But, my dear young lady, I do not understand. Here you are accepting all the terms of the will which you seem to despise. What you have rejected is the finest young fellow I know, who worships you."

Ethel laid her finger on his sleeve. "I wish you would try to understand me," she said. "I am only a poor girl who has to make the most of her wit and her invention. I hate duplicity. I should prefer to be open in all things. I want to fight and win my battle honestly."

Perhaps to try his wits a little, Mr. Beekman shut his eyes.

"Let me try as I will," he said, "I cannot make it out."

"It is all for Basil's sake," she murmured tremulously.

He opened his eyes and stared.

"All for Basil's sake?"

She nodded.

"All for Basil's sake that you put on this disguise and engage yourself to——"

A little cry burst from her. "Don't utter the word. It is like keeping a ball in air. My play is just to keep it there. You might afford to believe that I am doing nothing wrong, Mr. Beekman. You

might say to yourself that I am in a difficult position and that you will stand by me."

"Oh, I will stand by you. Only why not make everything clear? Why not take me entirely into your confidence?"

"It cannot be made clear, put down in black and white," she said in a sort of despair. "I ask you to divine by instinct."

"Don't talk about instinct, but tell me what you want me to do or not to do."

"Do not let them know that I am not the real Ethel Fairlie," she said, with a little dimple playing in each cheek.

"Do you mean——" he said, with a gesture towards the glasses.

"I mean that if you have ever thought me attractive——" she murmured.

"Ever thought you attractive? When you have turned the head of every man who ever came near you!"

"Say that I am ugly, hateful, odd, that I have always turned the head of every man away from me, that you would not have me for a sister, that you would not have me for a daughter, that, above all, you would not have me for a wife."

Mr. Beekman gave a grim laugh. "Come, come, don't expect me to go to such lengths. I believe in a hereafter. But I do begin to see your drift. You have tried to make yourself repellent."

"Tried," said Ethel with a little gesture. "I am hideous."

"I do not see it at all," said Mr. Beekman with a little chuckle.

"I see now that it all sets you off. Has he rejected you?"

"Not yet," said Ethel.

At this moment the half-hour gong sounded for luncheon. Miss Sabrina was seen coming down the garden path. As if recognizing a call to action, Ethel regathered all her energies. "Ollie, Ollie," she cried. "Where are you? I want you."

#### VIII.

At the moment of release Clara Frost had turned to Oliver.

"You must be so tired," she said with sympathy. "You ought to rest."

"I do feel tired," said Oliver. To have made this confession to Ethel would have seemed ignominy. It was natural and easy to make it to Clara.

"I do not think Miss Fairlie knows how heavy the camera is," said Clara. "Let me carry it for you. It is too warm to be running around at this time of the day. Let us go back to the house and sit down in the shade."

Permitted to question his sensations, Oliver felt that it was too warm. He yielded the camera to Clara with amiable compliance. Ap-

proaching the house by the upper terrace, they chose a place by the north piazza, where he let her choose a chair for him and piling it with cushions, then sat down, experiencing a pleasing sense of languor.

Clara begged some ice from Julius in the pantry and concocted a refreshing drink. Clara understood so well by long habit formed through irresistible sympathy and delight in pleasing Oliver how to make him comfortable. It is not impossible that her instinct to-day became inspiration in competition with this interloper and rival, whose sole object seemed to be to put the young man's powers to the test. Oliver gave a complacent smile as he sipped the delicious compound of pineapple and orange.

"It does seem pleasant to sit down in the shade," he said, with a little sigh. Clara had a fan in her hand, and while apparently fanning herself was trying to waft a breeze towards Oliver.

"Miss Fairlie is so bright and interesting," she said. "She has such good spirits. I can see how much you enjoy her society."

At first Oliver seemed to be testing his emotion towards Ethel; then as if remembering something very pleasant, he said with a smile, "Yes, I enjoy it very much."

"I wonder why she wears those blue glasses?" said Clara, who had a way of noticing things.

"She says it is necessary," Oliver replied.

"They do not look so very badly on her," Clara pursued, "and although usually I do not like red hair, I do not altogether dislike hers. Somehow she is so pretty, she carries it all off."

"Yes, I think so," said Oliver.

"They say that people with red hair usually have very bad tempers," Clara continued, always in the same soft, soothing voice, which seemed to suggest all meanings and supply all gaps. "But Miss Fairlie always seems to be half in fun. I suppose that when she makes you run here and there and get hot and uncomfortable, when she takes the best place, when she seems all the time to be inventing something new, she is putting your affection to the test. It is like the lady in the poem who sent her lover into the arena where there were lions to pick up her glove."

There had been all this time a visible conflict of feeling on Oliver's face. He reflected a moment before he answered. "I do not quite remember the story," he said, with an air of not quite enjoying the suggestion.

"Her name was Kunigunde, and her lover's name was Deslorges," said Clara. "Deslorges brought back the glove to Kunigunde, but he gave her up—renounced her on the spot."

Oliver listened as if his fancy had received a push, and read no little meaning into the story.

"There are no lions here," he then observed with an air of relief. "And all that is poetry and romance. Besides, the lover may have had some reason for going after the glove. In real life a good many questions come in. There are some things a man must do not because he likes to do them, but because it seems wiser to do them."

Clara apprehended. She knew all about the Hunter property.

"I am sure she is not heartless," she said, not referring to Kuni-gunde, but to Ethel. "It is only because she wants to make sure that you are honestly in love with her. Sometimes I feel as though she were actually looking about for some task that shall be harder than any she has set for you yet. I have seen her laugh to herself as she does it. She laughs so much. One wonders sometimes what she finds to amuse her, but I think it is partly because she is ransacking her brains to think what fresh torments she can contrive. It was a man, I believe, who devised the labors of Hercules, but Hero made Leander swim across the Hellespont, did she not? Or did he do it of his own accord?"

"I forget what happened to Leander," said Oliver uneasily.

"He was drowned," observed Clara significantly.

If Oliver hung fire for a moment, it was only, after listening to the end, to turn the matter over in his own mind.

"Nobody could drown swimming across the Hudson," he now said, "for there are so many ferry-boats and steam-tugs that would pick one up."

If Clara felt a change of wind, she too made a tack. "I do not mean to say that Miss Fairlie is not worth getting drowned for," she now observed. "She is so pretty and bright and gay, I do not wonder that your spirit is willing if your flesh is weak. I always feel that you are so delicate, I long to spare you any exertion."

It was at this moment, when Oliver was experiencing the bliss of this interval of rest, that the cry resounded, "Ollie, Ollie, where are you? I want you." And Ethel, leaving Mr. Beekman to Miss Sabrina, came running up from the garden. If for a moment she had quaked under Mr. Beekman's eyes, at this moment there was no sign of trembling. It was barely visible that she paused for a moment to take in the picture of Oliver settled at ease among the cushions, with Clara leaning towards him with her fan. Perhaps that very repose, that sanctity of complete companionship which made any interruption seem something profane, even unimaginable, was what suggested the idea of turning the young man out of his elysium.

"Oh Ollie," she cried, "I was so sorry to be obliged to stop and play the polite to Mr. Beekman, but he was an old friend of aunt's, don't you see? Now I have had a chat with him, and I am ready to go on with our pictures."

"Didn't you hear the gong?" said Oliver feebly; "it is almost luncheon time. We have to go and dress."

"Dress for luncheon! Who cares about luncheon? It is only a little while ago that we sat a whole hour over the breakfast-table. I do not want to spend all my day in eating. Julius can make us a sandwich and we can eat it as we climb the hill. I want to get that picture of the three oaks just as the shadows begin to fall to the west."

Anybody looking at Oliver could perceive that from the moment Ethel's voice smote on his ear he was uncomfortable. But this was a turn of the screw. He fairly shuddered.

"The three oaks!" he gasped. "Why, it is more than a mile, and uphill all the way."

"That is nothing," said Ethel. "I will hold the umbrella over you, and you can carry the camera, and now and then we can sit down under a tree and take a bite of the sandwich."

"Sandwiches hurt me," said Oliver with an effort at argument and persuasion. "It will give me a dreadful dyspepsia."

Ethel's whole being seemed to ripple into laughter.

"Dyspepsia! Why, exercise cures dyspepsia. Exercise is what you need. You do not get enough exercise in this comfortable house, you lily of the field! Solomon in all his glory did not have as easy a time as you do. Now, after snatching a hasty sandwich, we shall be coming down from the hill at five o'clock with such an appetite for afternoon tea."

Although crushed to earth with his new burden, Oliver, as if hypnotized, had jerked himself to his feet. He was about to rise when Clara put her hand on his arm.

"It is out of the question," she said authoritatively. "I forbid it, Miss Fairlie. Oliver is exhausted already with his morning's work. Going out again in the hot sun would make him ill, and as for eating a sandwich, absolutely it would be like suicide and nothing else."

Ethel from behind her blue glasses surveyed Clara, on whose cheeks a throbbing spot of bright color began to burn. "Why, it is tremendously exciting, is it not?" she said; "and I can see, Miss Frost, that you do take such beautiful care of Ollie I really feel grateful to you. I could understand in a moment that you knew just how to make him comfortable. Still, it helps to bring one's own duty before one. Come, Ollie, dear, we will go ask Julius for some sandwiches."

Again Oliver seemed to be drawn against his will towards her, but Clara, with quick decision, interposed herself.

"He is tired out," she pleaded.

"Has he complained?" asked Ethel with insouciance.

"I do not know that he has complained," returned Clara with equal aplomb.



"It is you who complain," said Ethel. "It is you who wish to make me appear base and cruel. She does not know, does she, Ollie? Why, Miss Frost, he simply loves to come with me! Tell her, Ollie, that you like better than anything in the world to do exactly as I tell you."

If Oliver's face had worn for a moment a rueful expression, as Ethel approached him the cloud passed off; his eyes twinkled; his lips expanded into a smile. "You are delighted to go to Three Oaks with me, aren't you, Ollie?" continued Ethel.

The words seemed to be forced from him, "Yes, I should like it very much."

"Come," said Ethel, audacious and imperious, but with something in her look and tone so caressing in its audacity that it provoked, that it tantalized, that it drew, that it held, then charmed invincibly. Oliver succumbed, wrenching himself from the cushions with the effort of the parting of body and soul. Ethel, with her hand extended and her face full of fun and laughter, waited until Oliver came up. Then with a little courtesy to Clara, "You see," she said. But at this moment Clara was unexpectedly reinforced, for Miss Sabrina and Mr. Beekman were ascending the steps, and at the same moment Mrs. Van Voorst and Mrs. Vanderweyer, with toilets refreshed and ready for luncheon, appeared in the doorway. Clara discreetly subsided. The others were certain to fight her battle for her.

"It is time for luncheon, Miss Fairlie," said Miss Sabrina in that lofty, freezing tone habitual with her when she addressed Ethel. "Do you not wish to make some preparation for it?"

"I was just going to tell you, dear granny," said Ethel, "that Ollie and I do not care about luncheon to-day. We are in such a hurry to take some more photographs that we shall simply put a sandwich in our pockets and start for Three Oaks hill."

All the ladies were plunged in alarm on the instant. A chorus of ejaculations, of entreaty, of command, ensued, and Mr. Beekman, as if frightened, retreated to a little distance and surveyed the scene from behind a tall palm. Clara sat, her hands folded and her eyes cast down. Oliver, in whom and for whom all these opposing claims centred, stood looking very warm and very tired in his white flannels holding tightly to Ethel's hand.

"My grandson shall do nothing of the sort," said Mrs. Van Voorst. "I tell you, Miss Fairlie, he shall do nothing of the sort."

"Oliver, go to your room and dress," said Miss Sabrina, almost stamping as she put down her foot to enforce her command.

"Really, Oliver," said Mrs. Vanderweyer, "it is time to use some judgment and discretion."

"Why, how excited everybody is," said Ethel, looking from one to

the other with surprise and curiosity. "Why, Ollie, dear, I hope you have got a good temper. It is very bad for people to get into such rages. Now look at me! I never get into a rage! I never quarrel with anybody."

"You put other people in a rage, Miss Fairlie," said Miss Sabrina. "With your extraordinary ideas, your usurpations, you upset all our cherished traditions."

Ethel looked back at the speaker with a little shake of the head and a little, deprecating wave of the hand. "Come, Ollie, we must get our sandwiches and start before it gets any later," she said. "I see that I shall have to draw everybody's teeth and claws before we can live together like a happy family."

Although these words, softly uttered, were addressed to Oliver, they were distinctly audible to all the rest of the party. If Mrs. Van Voorst and her daughter Amelia had tried to bear up under the affliction, remembering that almost every advantage bears some penalty, they now drew back. The whole fabric of their lives seemed to crumble. Here was Oliver like an innocent victim bound hand and foot in knots no power of theirs could undo. Miss Sabrina had all along seen that Ethel was a dangerous girl. She knew; she had measured the gulf that yawned between the cherished family ideas and those of this interloper. She had lain awake all night rehearsing her grievances. All day she had held herself by her two hands, as it were, to keep the peace. But this long-suppressed wrath, this pent-up speech, had been a preparation. She knew what she had to say, and it now burst forth.

"This is too much," she interrupted. "Miss Fairlie, it is a singular thing to be compelled to say to a visitor, but it becomes my duty to inform you that you are only here subject to our approbation. No engagement exists between you and my nephew, and I am at a loss to know how you can take this tone, as if he and his family——"

Here Ethel interrupted in her turn. "I not engaged to Ollie!" she exclaimed in blank astonishment, "Ollie not engaged to me!" There was a general shrinking among the group, but Miss Sabrina, feeling only her grievance, went on,—

"We only sent for you to see whether we approved of you."

"And don't you approve of me?" said Ethel with absolute naïveté.

"Most certainly not," said Miss Sabrina. "My mother has tried to overlook some of your deficiencies, but neither she nor my sister approves of you."

Ethel's glance travelled from one to the other of the ladies, but finding no comfort turned to Oliver. "But you approve of me, Ollie, don't you?" she demanded.

Oliver had not heard this clash of opposing sentiment without a clear consciousness of the importance of the moment. It really meant

a good many things to him. If he were really engaged to Ethel, if Ethel granted so much before everybody, why, as her betrothed, surely he must have certain rights. Nevertheless, at this moment he was less under the dominion of romantic instincts than of some other feelings. He wanted his luncheon—a generous, satisfying luncheon. He wanted the comfort of a cigar afterwards. Ethel had forbidden such indulgences, but after his long and toilsome morning his very soul yearned for the satisfaction. Clara's attentions had indeed reminded him of a lost but happier time. If at this moment Miss Sabrina had declared that the experiment had been tried and had failed, it seemed to him that he could submit to her decision without a single regret. While he stood irresolute he began to notice that his grandmother was frantically making signals to him. He might in any case have paused discreetly before answering a question which might commit him to a dangerous course. The truth was that Miss Sabrina's uncompromising demeanor had had the effect of bringing Mrs. Van Voorst to terms. Like a pendulum which has swung too far one way, she now swung back the same distance to the other. Sabrina was too determined, the old lady was saying to herself; Sabrina did not know how to compromise. It was she, Mrs. Van Voorst, who knew the world.

"Oh, what a situation!" she cried, with a melancholy shake of the head. "Oh, what a problem for the dear boy to face! But facts are facts, and duty is duty." Oliver's mind was instantly flooded with illumination. He had his grandmother's shibboleth by heart. Facts are facts, and there was always the question of the property. He turned his face with its glimmer of a smile which had gone around the circle back to Ethel. "Oh, yes," he said, "I approve of you."

"And you love to go to the top of Three Oaks hill with me and carry the camera?"

He trembled, he wavered, he shrank, but then he pulled himself up. "Yes," he said, but with so little spirit that after he and Ethel had set out on their expedition Mrs. Van Voorst was heard saying to herself:

"But he did not like it! I saw it in his eye that he did not like it."

## IX.

SOMEBODY has said that the world was made round in order that we may see only a little way ahead. Up to a certain point Ethel's purpose had been fiercely distinct. She had felt that as she travelled on in her way new constellations would arise, bringing new influences and new powers. Her impulse had come from a disappointment so acute, so deep, so tender, it had touched all the springs of her being. It had seemed the easiest of all courses to make a fight for her own rights. Perhaps a certain love of adventure that was in her blood had

helped her. She had surrendered herself to her part; had let herself be carried on by it, like the orator who said he flung himself into the middle of his speech and trusted to God Almighty to get him out again. It has already been seen that Ethel had moments of self-questioning, when she recoiled with a sort of shuddering distaste from the situation. It was no easy matter to maintain always the clear vision that excluded doubt. At times, indeed, all motive seemed to slip away from her; she hated the very idea of the money that she was contending for, and could forgive the Van Voorsts the irredeemable offence of having any claim to what she hitherto believed to be her own. Strange to say, the interview with Mr. Beekman had made her remember for what stakes she was playing and had brought back the old zest and spirit. To give up, to confess herself beaten, seemed to the girl impossible. It became a question of personal pluck; she had taken the risks and must accept them. Even great generals before their battles have mistrusted their own strength, then have put forth all their powers and smitten the enemy. Even so Ethel dismissed her hesitations and determined to play her role out to the end.

And Clara helped her. Every word and tone and look of Clara's offered fresh suggestion, now and then a supreme revelation. This girl with her surprised eyes but composed lips, her passivity, which yet had something of quiet determination behind its self-repression, interested Ethel. A superficial spectator would certainly accept the obvious belief that the two were playing against each other. Ethel had the comfort of feeling that for every stroke she put in for her own oar she put in two for Clara's side, and it was the delicate dawn of a belief that she was actually reinstating Clara in Oliver's affection which henceforth became her beacon light,—something to work up to.

To see Clara fold her hands, give that submissive droop to her eyes, and seem to wait, challenged Ethel to use her own weapons with skill and audacity. It was beautiful to see how Clara played into Ethel's hands even if unconsciously. It grew clearer and clearer that Oliver turned to Clara with a definite sense of relief, of rest after toil, pleasure after pain. Ethel's object was to make him feel that his only safety lay in staying at Clara's side. Clara, with her cushions, with her sweet, cool, delicious cups, rested and refreshed him. Did Ethel deceive herself when she believed that he became more and more languid in following her behests? that he felt the torment more than the fascination? At first he had liked the torment. Mrs. Van Voorst was right, he had enjoyed a little change. Ethel had whetted all his tastes and all his powers; he had looked with some pride at the length of his own jump out of the groove of his old, cherished habits. The trouble was that in spite of this marvel of a jump Ethel was as far off as ever. Let him press on as he might, she was still just out of reach. If he could but

reach her, why, then he might be content with the hour and not wish to turn the glass. However, there was always solid ground to come back to, there was always the question of the property. Facts were facts, and duty was duty.

Mr. Beekman stayed on in the neighborhood and kept up his watch. He had promised Ethel a chance for free play. He could not help admiring her spirit, for he liked the Portias, the Cleopatras, the Beatrices, of the world more than the Mariannas. Still stirred, pricked, interested in the drama that was going on, he intended just at the right moment to become a principal actor and bring the whole affair to the proper climax—a climax which suited his own ideas of justice, of right, and of his duty to Oliver Hunter and his wife, and to the two heirs of the property. Fate too at this moment had its own turn to give to the wheel.

There had been some delay about the arrival of the bicycle which Oliver had ordered in obedience to Ethel's wishes and, it might be added, in disobedience to the orders of all the rest of the family. Mrs. Van Voorst had consulted Mr. Beekman concerning the dangers incidental to "that infernal machine," as she called it.

"It will do him good, do him good," said Mr. Beekman.

"But think of the risks,—risks that make my blood run cold," said Mrs. Van Voorst. "Suppose he were to fall off?"

"Do him good. You spoil him a little among you. She will teach him tricks,—put him up to a little mischief."

All this was scant consolation to the ladies, who would have spared the young man all knowledge of the seamy side of life. How dear the idea of Clara became to them now! She imposed no tests, exposed him to no dangers—indeed, she herself took the brunt of things. Alas, alas, how happy they had been before the advent of this dangerous girl, who lived on excitement and who was constantly beckoning Oliver on into fresh fields. But there was always the question of the property. Oliver's wheel was looked at with a mingling of emotions. It was a heavy roadster, and when the ladies asked Mr. Beekman if it were safe he assured them that it was safe, as safe as if he were sitting on a chair—when you knew how. If Ethel was not diverted, she applied herself, nevertheless, to the task of initiating Oliver into the mysteries of wheel-practice as if she were tingling to her fingertips with zeal. Clara was at first forced to look on, feeling the absolute pathos of being left out. The ladies grouped under the trees, facing the performers across the interval of the drive, each watching the manœuvres with the eyes of a basilisk. It seemed to them that every time they rounded the curve by some diabolical ingenuity Ethel tried to have it seem that dangers played around Oliver's head like lightnings. They were obliged to watch the forging of the thunderbolt, shudder at the terrors, rejoice at the reprieve.

"I should never have thought of asking Oliver to attempt such a dangerous thing," said Clara more than once.

Mrs. Van Voorst could at least crush poor Clara.

"He would not have done it if you had. There are two kinds of women, the safe and the unsafe. You are safe, my good Clara."

"I think," said Miss Sabrina, "that it is better for a girl to be safe than to be charming."

"Oliver is like me," said Mrs. Van Voorst, "he is capable of making a sacrifice of his comfort when needed, and, after all, she is a spirited young creature."

"Too spirited by half," said Miss Sabrina. "If she does these things in the green twig, what will she do in the dry?"

Mrs. Van Voorst uttered her favorite little shriek as Ethel and Oliver were making their rounds. "He cannot fall off, grannie, dear, he is tied on. Like Mazeppa," Ethel called cheerfully.

"Like Mazeppa!" they all echoed with a shudder. But clearly he improved; he was gaining ease; he began to show signs of attaining proficiency. Presently everybody would be applauding Ethel's clever stroke in rousing Oliver into this display of energy. He would soon be going like the wind. Ethel, who had thrown herself into this enterprise without any idea of the advantage to be gained by it, had a sudden inspiration. There was Clara looking on in sombre resignation, why not teach her? Ethel made her approaches in the prettiest way, and Clara, startled, excited, half eager, half reluctant, realizing, indeed, her own inconsistency, yielded. It was so pleasant for her once to be in things, not merely to look on.

## X.

"THEY have been gone a long time," said Mrs. Van Voorst anxiously.

"But they enjoy it so much," said Ethel. Ethel was sitting on the wide piazza with the three ladies. It was time for afternoon tea. Mrs. Vanderweyer had lighted the lamp under the teakettle. All would soon be ready, but Oliver and Clara had not returned. Clara had instantly taken to the wheel and, for the first time in her life playing a spirited role, had become enamoured of it. Ethel had resigned in her favor. Of late it had been Clara who had taught Oliver, Clara with whom each day he ventured out farther and farther. Under this safe guidance his aunts had fewer alarms. Ethel had pointed out a pleasant path on a high bank overlooking the river, and to-day the two had set out at three o'clock, but for the last half-hour everybody had been conscious of growing anxiety. Ethel, as if feeling responsible for any fresh pickle in store for Oliver, had reasoned hopefully, had argued against probabilities, had apologized, excused, explained. Of course, nothing had happened; nothing could happen. Clara was discreet

and Oliver cautious. Still, when it was almost half-past five it seemed best to send Julius out in the little cart to discover what had become of the two runaways.

The one resource in the way of combating anxiety was to add attractions to the tea-table. Oliver would be exhausted; muffins and jam would be necessary. Oliver would need something nourishing and refreshing; strawberries and cream were produced. Oliver would need cool things, Oliver would need warm things, and everybody was busy in concocting delicacies. Still, the sombre load of dread upon the senses of the whole party would not lift. Solicitude increased every moment; even Ethel felt it. She recalled Mr. Beekman's telling her that, although all was fair in love and war, she must not have Oliver's breaking his neck on her conscience. She remembered her coming to the house, breaking in upon this haven of peace and comfort, and all her egotism, greed, covetousness, rose up before her. She began to be suffocated by a knot in her throat. She could sit there no longer. Her heart went out in sympathy to Mrs. Van Voorst, to Amelia, even to Miss Sabrina. She began to be afraid of their sad, accusing eyes.

"I will go and see; I will go and see," she cried.

She ran down the steps, along the terrace, reached the upper drive, and, going on to the upper gate, stood listening and waiting. The quiet was intense; she could even hear the murmur of the water, the rustle in the trees. Except for this gnawing of anxiety the stillness would have seemed peaceful; as it was, the silence of all things seemed brooding over some menace. Was that a rumble? Yes. Did she hear a voice? At the same moment a horse and wagon suddenly rounded the curve of the road and came into sight. It advanced so slowly that Ethel's mind, more and more alive to every suggestion that deepened her foreboding, could not help realizing that some great disaster had happened. Trembling from head to foot she pressed forward, and found, to her surprise, that Miss Sabrina had followed her.

"Oh, it is our poor, dear boy, our precious boy," moaned Miss Sabrina. "It is he who is the victim! I knew it! I felt it all the time."

Ethel put her arms around Miss Sabrina and supported her with all her young strength, but the steps of both were heavy and their breath came between sobs. Ethel blamed herself for everything. She was instantly conscious of some deep meaning in all this. A clutch at her heart set all her nerves thrilling with pain. A new-born sense of longing somehow to expiate her heartlessness, to show the difference between that past and present self of hers, made her long at this moment to suffer, to die if need be, for poor Oliver. All these thoughts were in her mind as they faltered on. They had reached

the cart. To their deep distress they saw that Oliver was reclining at full length with his head on Clara's lap. With a cry of pain, Ethel tried to clasp the unhappy boy whom she had sent into such danger.

"Oh Ollie, Ollie, dear," she cried, "tell me that you are not much hurt." She saw him avert his pale face. She saw him lift his hand as if to ward her off.

"Oh, make her go away! oh Clara, make her go away!" he said.

The rest of that day and all that night seemed to Ethel unreal,—a dream, a nightmare. Poor, impatient atom, with her impotent belief that she herself could make wrong right and right wrong, she knew at last, with a tingling of her whole being, that she was powerless. All that she had said and done glared in upon her like an uncanny vision. With a sensation of sickening fear she knew that doctors were summoned from far and near. There were whispered consultations, rushings to and fro, all of which roused not only the deepest anxiety but also the keenest curiosity. But she was wholly isolated. Between herself and each member of the family a gulf seemed to yawn. Even Mrs. Van Voorst, who had at times seemed almost fond of Ethel, now warded off her approaches with little shrieks. The night turned stormy. The falling swirls of gusty rain; the sobs of wind which rose to a fury and fell to a sigh; the inky blackness, changing at times to noonday brightness as the lightning flashed; the strange effects of thunder sometimes near and sometimes far, added their own terrors. When, worn out with suspense, Ethel went to her room she found it impossible to rest. If she fell asleep, in an instant she entered on a world where everything threatened; where shapes rose out of the darkness, monstrous figures approached with clutching fingers. Then, starting from this pretence of slumber, her every faculty and sense in a condition of intense wakefulness, she would fly to the door and listen, hearing sighs, whispers, exclamations! Could it be that Oliver was dying? But no, that was unmistakably his own voice! If with some relief she hastened back to bed, it was only to face the hateful phantasmagoria of dreams. It was something to be thankful for to have the night over, to see the eastern sky take on hues of rose and gold. Three planets melted into the blue above the dawn,—Venus, Jupiter, and the horned moon.

Before these presences what had hitherto been intangible, unsubstantial, and undefined shaped itself boldly. She was ashamed of her heartlessness and folly. With her senses all a-quiver, she drew in from this serenity, from this harmony of color, from this submissive grouping and waiting of everything in nature for the breath of dawn, for the coming of the sun, a new revelation. At this moment of weakness and humility her soul at last made its choice. . . .



. . . All that she had lately been striving for seemed to her incredible, a mad dream, a ludicrous scheme. Of what wrong could she complain when she herself had broken the simple law of integrity which keeps mankind together? She knew now that her experiment could never have come to anything. The whole experience seemed one in which her actual self had no part. All that was sordid slipped away. What did she care for money unless it were in reality and truth her own? Her enterprise was annihilated as if by an ethereal touch. It became absurd, incredible.

When the broad bars of darkness began to be flooded by day, Ethel rose from her kneeling posture before the window. Perhaps she was still in a state of nervous physical excitement, for the first thing that her new impulse of integrity expended itself upon was the breaking of the blue glasses. Indeed, she put into this effort a sort of vengeance, as if she were inflicting pain upon herself. The glasses broken, there were other retaliations to be taken upon the counterfeit who had been usurping the place of Ethel Fairlie. She had much to do yet before she could stand in the light of day and confess her failure. But the idea of casting behind her all this folly and wickedness rose before her like a promise, offering freedom of soul. To the real Ethel Fairlie belonged all that was dear to her.

When she finally left her room it was breakfast-time. Then she crept out, timid and ashamed. While she ran risks—took, as it were, her life in her hands—she had been able to summon up courage. Now that the mask had fallen from her face she cowered and shrank. As she waited in the upper hall for something that might offer sign or token from the sickroom, a serene nurse in cap and apron came out. Ethel clutched her arm. "Please tell me how he is," she murmured.

The nurse, who had had her own experiences in the house, looked at the girl with quickened interest.

"Oh, he has been asleep for five hours now," the nurse replied. "It was a little hard at first to get him under the effect of the opiate."

"Tell me what happened,—what was the injury," demanded Ethel.

"Oh, just the ankle," said the nurse. "The doctor was afraid at first that the ligaments might be torn, but afterwards decided it was just a sprain with some bruise where it was crushed under the wheel."

The trouble and dread rolled off Ethel's heart. After all, she had not killed him. "Miss Frost's arm is broken," the nurse continued, "but not badly. She has no fever, and I think it will do well."

Ethel had not once thought of Clara's possible injury. Now, recalling how bravely the girl had sat holding Oliver's head in her lap, evidently sustaining and comforting him, she said to herself there was something in Clara which deserved to have her failure turned into success, her humiliation to triumph, her acquiescence in fate to as-

endency. Ethel felt proud of Clara, she rejoiced in her. At this moment out came Miss Sabrina and, finding the nurse absent from the bedside, she approached with a tragic face, intending to address some remonstrance. Looking at Ethel, however, her face filled with surprise, almost with alarm. With a gesture she motioned the nurse back to the patient, but continued to look at Ethel as if fascinated. Ethel was too much carried away with the relief of the news concerning Oliver and her sympathy for Clara to remember that she herself had undergone a transformation. This instant change and renovation, however, suggested to Miss Sabrina fresh dangers and complications. What gave her a shock was the girl's beauty, for with the lovely dark-blue eyes unspoiled by glasses, her hair restored from flaming red to something resembling its golden brown, her dress reduced from bizarre contrasts to something simple, harmonious, this new Ethel Fairlie seemed an antagonist against whom one needed new and powerful weapons. What could such attractions mean except that they were put on in order to make a fresh assault upon the poor boy's affections? It was not a moment to trifle. Miss Sabrina had only too long looked on supine. Now there was a quick spring in her blood towards action, and what she did was to seize Ethel by the sleeve as if she had been a refractory child and lead her downstairs into the library. Here she drew her in, closed every door and window, then turned on her fiercely.

"My poor boy must not be disturbed," she said.

"I would not disturb him for the world," said Ethel, contrite, repentant, bent on reparation, still with a spark of mischief in her eye. "But is not my place at his side?" she proceeded.

This was Miss Sabrina's moment. "No," she answered with appalling seriousness. "Your place is not at his side. He has given you up."

"Given me up?" murmured Ethel, retreating a step in a tremor of surprise.

"You heard him telling you yesterday to go away," continued Miss Sabrina. "He has said it over and over during the night. His dread of you rendered him at times almost delirious. He has renounced you utterly. He made an effort, but it was an effort altogether beyond his strength, and at that moment of danger yesterday, when he and Clara were both in such dreadful peril, he understood his heart at last. It is Clara whom he loves. If he had not known you, he might never have realized the worth of her affection. Now he realizes it and is grateful to her for it. He appreciates her devotion and self-sacrifice."

Ethel stood as if spellbound, perhaps experiencing the thrill of arriving at the climax of which she had dreamed. Then, after a momentary pause,—

"I think it is magnificent," she exclaimed. She tried to take Miss Sabrina's hand, but experienced a rebuff. "I want to tell you something on my own side," she now said. "You do not quite understand."

"I do understand,—I understand perfectly," declared Miss Sabrina, swelling with the pride of her comprehension. "In giving you up, Oliver gives up all right to his uncle's property. That he acknowledges and we all acknowledge. But in regaining his freedom he regains more than all of Oliver Hunter's property,—his dignity, his peace of mind, his comfort of body. He regains too his first impulse of love and affection."

Ethel could not be restrained. She caught Miss Sabrina's hand. "But it is I who give up the property,—who give Oliver up," she cried. "You make me feel my own littleness, my own wickedness, as if I were all over spots."

Miss Sabrina shook off the soft clasp. "It is of no use," she said. "Of course, I realize what you must feel, but I can spend no more time. The nurse must have her breakfast, and I have promised Clara to let her lie on the lounge in Oliver's room. He feels safer when she is near him."

Saying this, and with a look and tone which put an immeasurable distance between the girl and herself, Miss Sabrina swept away. Ethel, having cast off her badness, could hardly understand how it was a case of the leopard's being unable to change his spots.

Mrs. Vanderweyer coming down presently Ethel addressed herself to her, but Sabrina having put her sister on guard against making the smallest concession to the dangerous girl, Amelia was of a discretion which made it impossible for her to listen to anything that Ethel said. Mrs. Van Voorst when addressed did finally take in the suggestion, but quite incredulously. She give up the property? He give up the property? Why didn't he wait? She was appalled before the idea of such a sacrifice. It was only when Mr. Beekman arrived that Ethel could find an actual hearing. But since Mr. Beekman had already received a communication from Miss Sabrina, announcing that Oliver preferred to renounce all claim to the property and marry Clara, he was ready to felicitate Ethel upon her triumph. He found Ethel in quite a different state of mind, seeing her misdeeds like fireworks in the darkness. She had believed that she loved Mrs. Hunter's money and enjoyed making a fight for it, but at this moment all she longed to do was to be rid of any idea of it.

If Mr. Beekman had hitherto defined the situation as cupidity pitted against cupidity, he now found one side trying to outdo the other in disinterestedness. However, he saw a glimmer of light through the confusion, and, being used to complications, he set to

work inquiring as to causes, sifting evidence, and arriving at facts. He had never been impressed with the consistency of human nature, and had all along felt that the right time would come for him to manage the case according to his own lights. The facts as he now counted them off on his fingers were these: Ethel, a little run away with by the role she had assumed in her grief and disappointment, had for a few days gone on with high spirits. Then, upon the discovery that she was making Clara unhappy, and with the idea of showing Oliver that it was Clara whom he needed, she had played out the part with no little effectiveness. Certainly the accident of the two being run away with down the bank by their wheels could not reasonably be laid at Ethel's charge. Fate, and fate only, was responsible for the coming of the nasty cropper. Nor could fate be blamed seriously. For when the whole story was known of how when the two found themselves at the bottom of the hill and in each other's arms, it could be seen that it needed the excitement of the moment to break down the barrier of reserve. Oliver understood in that dreadful hour what a wealth of tenderness there was in Clara. Thus the accident might as well be regarded as a necessary crucial test. Indeed, both Oliver and Ethel had in a different way, by opposite lines of thought, reached the same state of mind. One was as anxious as the other to renounce all claim to the property. Each wished to outrun the other in generosity. But this conclusion, if it stupefied Mrs. Van Voorst and her daughters, exactly coincided with Mr. Beekman's ideas, and a little later it had become his fixed belief that his own tact and knowledge of the world had carried the whole matter through to this desired result.

It had become a case for the lawyers to settle. For when both heirs named under the will were unable to inherit, and that precisely for the same reason that each was to marry another person than the one described by the testator, why, then, a compromise became necessary. The Van Voorsts had long desired a comfortable town house, and accordingly took the property on Madison Avenue, while Ethel had its equivalent in bonds and mortgages. It has to be confessed that she took her portion with an humble and a contrite heart. Her masquerade was always a memory to bring the color to her cheeks and a droop to her eyelids. She had felt herself cruelly wronged by fate, and she had longed to set things right. An idea came to her like a whirlwind, and she gave herself up to that whirlwind. That she did not come to grief, that she did not find she had staked all she prized and lost, was something to be thankful for all her life. For it seems sometimes as if the whole human race were caught in that black, bitter whirlwind, that struggle of brutal force for money, and money no matter how gained. It was Basil who finally saw it all in the best

light. Sometimes our actions turn out worse than the original motive which impelled them. It really seemed to Basil as if fate meant to make amends to everyone. Clara Frost was happy and the Van Voorsts ought to be content. If they suddenly recognized in this new Ethel just the grace, charm, and wit they had always desired for the wife of their dear Oliver, it seemed, at least to Mrs. Van Voorst and Amelia, to show what a softening and refining influence the visit at Riverbend had had upon the girl. What might she not have become if the love-affair had not been interrupted by that unlucky accident. It was a terrible pity.

"But it was Clara Ollie always really cared for," Miss Sabrina would argue, and then Mrs. Van Voorst would exclaim, "What stuff! You know nothing at all about it. He liked Miss Fairlie. I saw it in his eye! And to think that girl is marrying somebody else after all, and to think of our losing all that money that would have enabled us to get on so comfortably! I tell you, facts are facts, and duty is duty."

Oliver's aspirations, doubts, fears, and hesitations gradually cleared up. He thought Ethel's eyes so pretty without the glasses it was almost a pity she had ever worn them. Certain recollections of the few days when Ethel had driven him hither and thither always made him feel that he had known something of life's possible flavor. Later, when he used to meet Mrs. Basil Thorpe in society, he had a sensation of coming upon something sweet and fragrant that penetrated some untouched depths of his nature; but, after all, he enjoyed life with Clara, and was never known to dissent from Miss Sabrina's unalterable assertion, that "that Miss Fairlie was a very dangerous girl."



## IN MEMORIAM

BY L. H.

### I.

**A** LICHENED slab:  
A name thereon  
That gentle rains have long defaced.

### II.

A faithful heart:  
A name within  
That scalding tears have not erased.

# FALL WORK IN THE GARDEN

*By Eben E. Rexford*

*Author of "Home Floriculture"*



THE fact that fall affords ample opportunity for a good deal of work in the garden is not generally recognized by the amateur gardener. He has the impression that very little can be done to advantage at that season, consequently very little—oftener nothing at all—is done. The natural result of this way of thinking is that our gardens suffer in more ways than one from neglect which a little study of the subject would do away with.

The fact is, a great deal of work can be done to better advantage in the fall than in the spring. By giving proper attention we may anticipate, in a considerable degree, much that is generally done in March and April,—and poorly done, in many instances, because of the rush which then comes on. If all that part of garden-work which can be done advantageously in fall is done then, that which is left for the spring can be done much more thoroughly than is usually the case because of the absence of the hurry which nearly always characterizes work in the garden when two seasons are crowded into one. Therefore, for the sake of avoiding undue haste and the slovenly work likely to grow out of it, as well as for the garden's sake, aim to do in fall all that can be done then, and do it well. Keep in mind the fact which every wise gardener fully understands the force of, that a garden which receives attention only during the spring season is a garden only half-cared for.



About the first garden-work to be done in fall is the making and planting of the bulb-bed. This phase of gardening was quite fully treated in an article on "Bulb Culture" which appeared in this Magazine in October, 1901, therefore I shall not now devote much space to it, but simply condense the advice given in the earlier article.

Bulbs should be planted as early in the fall as possible. September is the best month to do the work in. October answers very well. But I would never encourage anyone to defer it until November, because late-planted bulbs have very little time to make root-growth in. Early-planted ones complete this part of their yearly work before cold

weather comes, and they are therefore in fine condition for the work of the season when spring arrives. Hence, plant early.

In making beds for bulbs, spade the ground up well to the depth of at least a foot and make it fine and mellow, working into it a liberal amount of old, well-rotted cow-manure. If not naturally well-drained, provide good artificial drainage, for no bulb will do well if water collects and stands about its roots. Let the beds have a slope from centre to edge, that the water from melting snows and early rains may run off readily. Make your beds as soon as you send off your order for bulbs. Have everything in readiness for them, and when they arrive put them into the ground at once. Bulbs exposed to the air and light part rapidly with their vitality. Plant the larger ones about eight inches apart and from five to six inches deep. Four inches apart and four to five inches deep will answer for the smaller ones. Before cold weather sets in cover the beds with litter or leaves to the depth of a foot.



Right here let me briefly explain the philosophy of a winter covering for plants, as it will enable the reader to understand better the whys and wherefores of much of the advice given in this article. We do not protect plants in winter with a view to keeping the frost away from them, as many suppose, but to *keep it in* after it has penetrated the ground about the roots of the plants. In other words, we aim to prevent the sun from thawing out the frost.

It is a fact not very well understood as yet by most amateur gardeners that injury to plants in winter results from violent alternations of heat and cold, rather than continued cold. To-night they freeze. To-morrow the sun shines and extracts the frost, and at night they freeze again. The frequent and rapid alternation of these conditions brings about a rupture of cells, which weakens the plant if it does not ruin it. If a comparatively tender plant is frozen and remains in that condition throughout the winter, and the frost is extracted gradually from it in spring, as a general thing no harm will be done. By covering the roots of plants in fall we keep the sunshine from interfering with the frost in the soil, and it remains in control until spring weather operates upon it and overcomes it by such slow degrees that there are no abrupt transitions to do violence to the plant-cells. In this way we prevent the soil from heaving under the action of frost and breaking the tender roots of the plants. Some roots, however, are elastic enough to be able to adjust themselves to the strain made upon them, but those of the bulbs are not of this class, and because of their inelasticity they are sure to be greatly injured if not given the protection they need.

Hardy herbaceous and perennial plants can be set out or transplanted to advantage in fall. Old clumps are quite likely to need division and resetting. In order to keep them in vigorous health prune away all weak and diseased roots, and in no way can this be done so effectively as by lifting the entire plant, cutting it apart, and discarding all but the strongest roots. If this is done as soon as the plant ceases to grow and appears to be dormant, the newly-set plant will have time to make considerable root-growth in its new location before cold weather puts an end to work of this kind. Next season it will bloom as if nothing had happened to it, but, of course, it will not give as many flowers as an older plant because there will be fewer flower-stalks; but it will make a strong growth during the season, and the second year will see it at its best. After the third crop of flowers from transplanting it is well to repeat this treatment. By doing some of it each year you have two sets of plants in hand,—one in its prime and one getting ready to do its most satisfactory work next year.

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Hollyhocks and other perennial plants which are grown from seed sown during the summer should be transplanted in fall to the places where they are to bloom. The hollyhock is very hardy, but it is quite susceptible to injury from excessive moisture. The rains of spring and water from melting snow bring about decay of the thick and spongy foliage, which is quite sure to be communicated to the crown of the plant, and from there it extends to the roots. To prevent this I would advise covering each plant with something that will turn aside water. An inverted flower-pot, an old box, or a pail that has outlived its usefulness in the household will answer the purpose well. After putting whatever you make use of as a water-protector in place, throw litter or leaves about it, as advised for bulbs. This can be removed as soon as the ground thaws in spring, but I would not advise uncovering the plants until the rainy season is over. Leave them covered until the time comes for growth to begin. It is a most excellent plan in growing the hollyhock to have the ground slope away on all sides from the crown of your plants. This prevents water from settling about or near the plant. No other border plant is so easily injured by excessive moisture, especially if it comes in contact with the foliage.

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Shrubs can be transplanted with entire safety immediately after they have completely ripened the growth of the season. This is indicated by the fall of the foliage. In transplanting them disturb the roots as little as possible. Keep all roots which are unavoidably exposed covered with wet sacking or moss while out of the ground. If any are



mutilated, cut them off smoothly with a sharp knife. Before lifting any shrub have the place where it is to be planted ready for it, and be sure to have it large enough to allow for a natural disposal of all its roots. After filling in with fine soil about the plant, water well. All transplanted shrubs should be pruned sharply at planting-time; as a general thing, a third of the old wood should be removed. Provide yourself with a good pruning-knife and see that it is kept sharp enough to make a smooth, clean cut. A dull knife that "haggles" away the wood should never be tolerated.

Pruning can be done to advantage in fall among such shrubs as are not laid down and covered in winter. These latter should be left for spring-pruning. There can be no hard-and-fast rule as to how to prune or how much to prune. The character and habit of the shrub must determine this to a great extent. Some have but few branches. These will require no thinning out, but simply a shortening, which will induce the production of side branches, thus giving a more bushy and compact plant than would be likely if the plant were left to itself. Other shrubs make such a rampant growth that they soon become a thicket. These should be thinned out, leaving the plant open to a free circulation of air. Old and weak wood should always be removed. By yearly attention to this matter we may renew a shrub from season to season and keep it always strong, provided we feed it well. But care must be taken in pruning to discriminate between shrubs which produce flowers in spring from buds formed in fall, like those of the lilac, and those which make growth in spring before blooming. The latter may safely be pruned now, but all belonging to the class of which the lilac is a representative should not be pruned until after the completion of the flowering-period. To prune such shrubs at this season is to destroy next spring's crop of flowers.



Roses are generally considered hardy plants, except at the extreme North, but the fact is, few varieties are sufficiently hardy to stand the severity of winter north of Philadelphia without protection. They may come through safely for some years in succession. Then a peculiar season happens along and our bushes are almost ruined by it. In order to make sure of wintering them well it is quite necessary to protect them in some way. Some persons gather the stalks together and wrap them in straw from the ground up. This method is not always satisfactory. The best system of protection for the rose of which I have any knowledge is that of bending the bushes down upon the ground and covering them with soil to the depth of five or six inches. This plan, however, is adapted only to locations where surface water will run away readily. Stagnant water about rose-branches in

spring, before it is safe to uncover them, will always severely injure them. In bending down the bushes, preparatory to covering them, great care should be taken not to break or crack the stiff and somewhat brittle stalks. Make your bends slowly and gently in order to allow the branches to accommodate themselves to the strain put upon them. When you have them flat upon the ground lay a piece of sod upon them to hold them in proper position until you can give them their final covering. Lay them all in the same direction and as close together as possible to economize in covering material. Old and large stalks and the great canes of the climbing roses are exceedingly difficult to manage without injuring them. To avoid the risk of breaking them, as the result of too abrupt a bend, I would advise heaping earth against the base of the plant, on the side towards which the stalks are to be bent, and bending the bushes over it carefully and slowly. This substitutes curves for sharp bends and greatly simplifies the work of caring for stubborn plants. If soil is used as covering, let it be as light and porous as possible. Leaves are excellent, if one can get enough of them. Lay boards or evergreen branches or wire netting over them to prevent their being blown away. The hardier sorts of hybrid tea-roses should have their tops cut off close to the ground and be covered with at least a foot of leaves, confined within a pen of boards or an old box.

◆

The teas and so-called ever-bloomers—a class comprising the Bengal, Noisette, and Chinese roses—are so tender that they cannot be expected to survive the rigors of a Northern winter unless they are given the very best of protection. Even then they cannot always be depended on. Several methods are employed. Some pack straw snugly about the plants and cover it with four or five inches of earth. Others make little bundles of straw and lay two tiers of them all about the plants at right angles, thus making a sort of house of straw, which is filled in with leaves or litter, with a roof of evergreen branches. Either of these methods, if carefully carried out, will bring through seventy-five per cent. of the plants safely. Those who cannot obtain straw can use earth alone, putting leaves, litter, or other refuse on top, with wire netting to hold it in place if evergreen boughs are not to be had. If one fears to trust these roses to out-door wintering, they can be lifted late in fall, packed closely together in boxes of soil, and stored in the cellar. There they should be kept cold and dry. In April they can be set out in the garden. Most of them will winter safely in this way, but we do not get such growth from them as from those left in the ground. The tops of these tender roses should be cut away before covering or lifting. All we care to save is the roots. The ideal covering is snow. I have several times had very tender varieties covered

with snow before I had given them any attention whatever. Every one of the plants so covered which *remained* covered until spring came through in excellent condition. If all our roses could have a snow-drift to winter in, there would be no difficulty about bringing them through in good condition.

Roses should not be uncovered in spring until the weather becomes settled. Too early removal of protection is often followed by cold weather, which injures the plants quite as much as exposure during the winter would. "One swallow doesn't make a summer," neither does one bright, warm day assure us that weather which can be trusted has come to stay. Therefore, to be on the safe side, allow your roses to remain covered until the buds on other shrubs begin to grow. Even then do not remove the covering all at one time, but be several days about it, that the plants may gradually adjust themselves to the new condition of things.

◆

The early frosts of fall will generally be severe enough to put an end to the flowering of dahlias and scorch the foliage off the canna and the caladium, but it is not advisable to lift the roots of these plants until some weeks later. Let them ripen off in the ground. Along in the latter part of October dig them. Choose a warm, sunny day for this work. Lift each clump of roots carefully, and lay it on boards in the sun, after shaking off as much of the soil as will readily part from it. Do not remove the old stalks at this time. At night cover the roots well with blankets or old carpet. Next day, if the weather is favorable, expose them to the sun, and do this for several days in succession, being careful to cover them each night. After a little the earth will all crumble away from them. Then—and not till then—cut off the stalks three or four inches from the roots. Leave them exposed to the ripening effect of late fall sunshine as long as it seems safe to do so. Then store dahlias, cannas, and caladiums in the cellar, putting them on shelves some distance from the floor and spreading them out well. Never heap them together and never put them on or near the floor, where they will gather dampness. Gladiolus-roots can be put in paper bags and hung in frost-proof rooms. Some prefer to keep dahlias and other tuberous roots there, thinking it a safer place for them than the cellar. But I prefer the cellar, unless it is a damp one. In rooms the roots are likely to dry out too much. Never make the mistake of lifting these roots and taking them immediately to the cellar or other place of storage. If this is done, they are almost sure to decay. They should be given ample time to dry out well before being put away for the winter. Bear this in mind, for it is of the utmost importance.

Aquatic plants grown in natural ponds will need no protection, but those grown in cement basins or wooden tanks, as most are at present in amateur gardening, will have to be protected against severe freezing. A good plan is to set boards up about the tank or basin containing the plants in such a manner as to leave a space of about a foot between the surface of the water and the covering. Lay boards across these, and then cover with at least a foot of coarse litter, heaping it up well about the sides of the tank. With such a covering the plants will no doubt freeze to some extent, but not sufficiently to injure them. The roots of tender varieties should be packed in moist soil and stored in the cellar, where the temperature can be kept at about fifty degrees.

◆

The amateur gardener often finds it difficult to decide as to the time when winter protection should be given his plants. Sometimes we have pleasant weather until late in fall, and we put off this work from day to day, thinking they would be injured by covering them while warm weather continued. All at once cold weather comes and finds our plants wholly unprepared for it. We at once set about doing the work that ought to have been done before, but whatever is done under unpleasant conditions is likely to be poorly done, and the result of our neglect is quite apparent when spring comes. We are entirely safe in counting on cold weather by the first of November at the North, and I would advise getting plants ready for winter at that time. It is so late in the season that no harm will be done by it if the weather continues mild. Choose a pleasant day for this work, if possible, and do it leisurely, that it may be well done. It doesn't pay to hurry it, for hurry means half-doing what you undertake.

We have many shrubs which are considered iron-clad in their ability to resist the influences of a severe winter, but I find that it is well worth while to give some protection to even these. A few forkfuls of litter about their roots will be of great benefit to them because the covering, though slight, enables them to save something in vitality, and a saving in the vital force of all plants is what should be aimed at if we would have them do their best.

◆

After the work outlined above is done there will still be considerable to do in getting the garden ready for winter. Neatness should characterize it at all times, and in order to have it as attractive as possible during the winter everything of an unsightly nature should be cleared away. Go over the border and cut off old flower-stalks close to the roots they sprang from. Never leave this refuse to be blown about by the winter winds, but make a heap of it and burn it. Gather

up the stakes and trellises used as supports for plants in summer and store them away in some sheltered place. If this is done each fall, and a coating of paint is given them each spring, they will do good service for several years, but if left exposed to the weather the year round they will seldom outlast a second season. The same is true of all garden appliances. The wise gardener will never leave his rake or hoe hanging on the fence or a tree-limb over winter, and the spade and trowel in the bed where he used them last. There is a great deal of satisfaction in having good tools to work with, and rusty tools are never good ones. With proper attention they can be kept in fine condition until worn out. Go over them with sand-paper when you store them away, and scour them till they shine. Then give each one a wash of oil to protect it against dampness. When the last of these little jobs is done, and not till then, the work of the season can be considered as ended.



## HOMESICK

BY ALICE E. ALLEN

I WANT to go back to the orchard—  
 The orchard that used to be mine;  
 The apples are reddening, and filling  
 The air with their wine.

I want to wake up in the morning  
 To the chirp of the birds in the eaves;  
 I want the west wind through the corn-fields—  
 The rustle of leaves.

I want the old song of the river,  
 The little, low laugh of the rills;  
 I want the warm blue of September  
 Again on the hills.

I want to lie down in the woodland,  
 Where the feathery clematis shines,  
 God's blue sky above, and about me  
 The peace of the pines.

I want to run on through the pasture  
 And let down the dusty old bars,  
 I want to find you there still waiting,  
 Your eyes like twin stars.

O nights, you are weary and dreary,  
 And, days, there is something you lack,  
 To the farm in the little, old valley,  
 I want to go back.

# THE "WON'T GO HOME"

By *Josiah Flynt*

*Author of "Tramping with Tramps," "The Little Brother," etc.*



ONE afternoon, a few months ago, I was sitting upstairs in the Café Bauer in the Unter den Linden in Berlin. This café is one of the places in Europe where a man runs chances of meeting both friends and enemies that he has not seen for years; it is a great gathering-spot for readers of newspapers, drinkers of coffee and other beverages, fancy billiard players, and travellers and sight-seers from all parts of Christendom. It is also a convenient point from which to see Kaiser Wilhelm prance down the Linden on horseback when he happens to be in town, and in summer the balcony is full of people who look up and down the street, making comments on the foot-passengers and vehicles below.

On the afternoon in question I was sitting well back in the café reading an editorial in the *Saturday Review* on American feeling regarding the Boer war, when some one touched me on the shoulder and said, "Hello, Shorty."

I looked up and saw a fashionably dressed man about forty years old, whose face seemed familiar, but whose name I could not recall. The face was familiar on account of a horse-shoe-looking scar on the left cheek and a dash of white in one of the eyebrows, which were otherwise jet-black. Although these phenomena suggested former acquaintanceship, I had to admit to the man that his name had passed out of my remembrance.

"I'm sure we've met before, though," I hastened to add, unwilling to seem inhospitable or afraid of being swindled.

"You think we've met before, do you?" he replied, in a hard, metallic voice, with a slight sneer on his lips. "I suppose you haven't forgotten the time you and I had to walk twenty-five miles over the ties in Ohio because we thought we could play poker, have you?"

"Why, your name isn't——"

"And I guess you can remember still," he interrupted me, "the ten days we did out in Iowa for riding on a freight-train with the law against us. Yes, my name's Freckleton, and your name's Shorty. Shake!"

We had not seen each other in ten years, and he had changed and

I had changed, but the reminders of our former companionship were sufficient. A decade before we had scrambled together for a living in the Middle and Far West as only two men can who have merely good health to go on. He had been forced into the scramble by an irate stepfather, and I had got into it in order to learn about tramps. The reason that I failed to recognize him was that he had parted with a heavy black mustache which had adorned his face during the tramping days.

I must needs tell him the story of my wanderings first, and they were related truthfully up to the very moment when he had found me in the café.

"Now, let's have your tale of woe," I said, on completing mine. "What are you doing here in Berlin, to begin with?"

"What do you think?" and he smiled.

"I can't possibly imagine, unless it's gambling."

"I haven't gambled—with cards—for over a year."

"Well, what are you gambling with then?"

"Mostly with my nerve, when I gamble at all. I am just loafing now."

"Where have you come from?"

"'Frisco."

"Where did you come from before you got to 'Frisco?"

"Siberia."

I reminded him of the straightforward manner in which my travels had been told, and asked that he be equally civil. I might have been asking him questions till now, so far as his answers gave me any satisfaction.

"I suppose you'd like to know how I came to be loafing?" he asked at last, settling back on the sofa and lighting another cigar.

"The last time I saw you, you were loafing," I could not help replying. "That doesn't surprise me in the least."

"Ah, but I mean swell loafing."

"Well, go ahead with your story."

"Were you ever in St. Petersburg?"

"Yes."

"Did you ever hear of a young fellow there in the machine business by the name of Willson—Mat Willson?"

"Yes. His father had that big machine-place in 'Frisco. He went to Siberia with a German called Puttkammer."

"How'd you know?"

"Oh, I knew; it leaked out in St. Petersburg. Puttkammer is here in Germany now."

"Yes, I know he is. However, I got acquainted with Willson about a year before he went to Russia. If you've heard of him, you know

what he is. I knew him first while he was at college. He liked to play cards pretty well, and I was in that line myself. I started out as a reg'lar in the business about a year after you and I were together. I had my ups an' downs, but I was pretty slick by the time I struck the Coast, an' could hold my own with the best of 'em. Young Willson came into a place one day where I generally hung out and got into an open game. He lost nearly all the money 't he had. I rather liked his way, an' took him aside. 'Are you cleaned up, Kid?' I asked him. 'No, I ain't cleaned up,' he says, 'but I'm — near, an' I've only got ten dollars to see me through the next quarter at college.' He didn't whine at all—just stated it as a fact. 'Want to risk the ten?' I said. 'Not on *my* luck,' he said, and grinned.

"'Well, I tell you what I'll do, Kid,' I said to him. 'If you want to risk the ten on *my* luck, I'll give you half o' what I make?'

"'Suppose you make nothing?'

"'Then you're out ten plunks more.'

"'Well, I'll chance it. I'd only spend the X anyhow.'

"So I got into a game, an' pulled out about six hours later two hundred and eight dollars to the good. I give the kid his one hundred and four dollars—he'd lost about nine hundred—an' told him never to gamble any more. He hands me fifty dollars back and asks me to keep on playin'. I didn't have any more time that day, and quit. He kept track of me, and I learned to know all about him. There ain't much to tell, I guess, if you've heard of him in Petersburg, except that his governor was rich and stingy, and that he was struck, and is struck yet, on a pretty little girl called Jess. She was poor, an' he wasn't through college, and his governor wouldn't listen to the splice. Finally the governor sent him to Russia on that agency deal.

"One day I got a letter from him. It's in my pocket now; I took all of them out of my trunk this morning to show to an Englishman who wants to invest some money. Here it is," and he produced a large, thick envelope. "Read that," he said, handing me one of the letters, "and then I'll show you the rest, and then I'll go on with the story."

The first part of the letter was devoted to a description of the German Puttkammer, who had been a missionary, and then came the following:

"We've worked up a big scheme between us. You tell Jim Slattey and Bob Wilkinson, and get them interested. The scheme is this: Out in China, not very far from the Siberian line, there's a heathen god who's daft about buying things with wheels in them and new inventions generally. He is a young fellow, and lives in Urga. The German says that an Englishman sold him an automobile about a year ago for fifteen thousand dollars; it cost fifteen hundred dollars. Think of it, Freck, ten times what the thing was worth! Puttkammer says that if the god hasn't killed himself with



## The "Won't Go Home"

the automobile, we can sell him almost anything at a big profit. Now, I'll keep the thing warm at this end of the line, and you, Jim, and Bob do likewise at your end.

"The god pays for what he buys in big checks that look like magnified Chinese laundry tickets, but the German says they're good as gold, and that almost any merchant will cash them.

"Whether we sell anything or not on the first trip, we'll have a fine time, and can get pointers for future journeys. Puttkammer is convinced that a steam calliope is the best thing to experiment with first, and he advises that we all meet in Irkutsk. When you write call the calliope 'Won't Go Home till Morning,' so that no one will drop on to us in case my letters are opened. If the thing works, it'll be the biggest graft going. I can't make the missionary out fully, but my opinion is that he's half a grafter and half a hypocrite. Anyhow, he swears he'll stick by us for two hundred dollars per, and I guess we can risk him. He says that he's willing to take us to L'Hassa afterwards, if we pull out of this thing with whole skins.

"Of course, I shall give up the agency here before I leave, and I am writing to the governor about it now. It'll make him mad, I suppose, but I'm not selling anything, and I'm—tired of the job. He's just keeping me here, anyhow, so that I can't make love to Jess. I don't know how much the colony here are next to me, but they think I'm a soak, I can see that all right. They ask me every now and then what I do nights, and as I don't tell them, they've got rather suspicious, but it's none of their business.

"I've got money enough to see me through, I guess, but bring along some spare cash in roubles, 'cause you can never tell where we may get stuck.

"If you see Jess don't tell her anything about the god because she might worry. I've written her to stop sending any more letters here. Ta-ta.

"MAT."

The other letters were confined to the kind of calliope to be sold to the god and other details. I handed them back to Freckleton, and he resumed his story.

"Course, I was a pretty old guy to go in for a thing like that," he said, "but I had some money put by, and I thought I might as well gamble it on a god as on my luck with the 'Frisco gamblers. Besides, I'd heard a lot about the chances in the East for a fellow pretty fly with the pasteboards, and I knew if the god business fell through I could try my luck at poker in Yokohama, Shanghai, and the other places in those parts. Every fellow wants to shift the landscape now and then, and one of the 'moving on' fits had come my way.

"Well, to hurry up the story, Willson, Puttkammer, Jim, Bob, and myself all connected at Irkutsk. They call this place the Paris of Siberia, but God help you if that's the only Paris you've ever seen. It's

about as much like Paris as a county-seat in Nebraska is like New York. It suited our purposes all right, though, as a starting-point, and we made our final plans there. I had brought along a swell ballerina's outfit with me. I studied the map of those parts a good deal before leaving 'Frisco, and I was sure that, if one of us could seem to arrive in Urga out of the Gobi Desert, mysterious and fairy like, with the calliope tooting away, a bigger impression would be made than if all of us got there at the same time. Willson didn't like my ballerina suggestion at first and voted for straightforward give and take business dealings with the god, but I brought all of them around to my notion. There's nothing like gauze and mystery to make people interested and curious, and I knew that the god would do a lot more guessing if the 'Won't Go Home' came out of the Gobi Desert.

"We picked out Willson to do the ballerina stunt. We drew lots, and he got stuck. It was rather hard on him since he had not favored the scheme, but he was game nevertheless and didn't grumble. We took the 'Won't Go Home' to Kiakhta first. Then Puttkammer connected with some Tibetans and arranged with them about Willson's entrance into Urga. The Tibs were also rather shy about the desert and ballerina business, but they finally consented to pull the 'Won't Go Home' for a few miles in the desert, or what we took for the desert. I guess we never got into the real part of it. We told them that Willson was a big Injun in the religious line up at the North Pole, and that it was his custom to enter a town dressed up in the outfit 't we'd brought along. They took it all for straight goods, and we travelled on towards Urga. Ever been out in those parts?"

"Only as far as Tomsk."

"Well, boy, it's one of the most God-forgotten districts this side of hell. You think of home and mother and sister Sue right straight away. If we'd dared to let the 'Won't Go Home' play once in a while it wouldn't have been so lonesome, but we'd decided that she mustn't make a sound till Willson and his Tibs were actually going into Urga. So we just had to plug along without music or anything else but vodka; that makes a man forget his troubles. The vodka wasn't so bad at night, 'cause you didn't have to look at it then, but in the daytime it didn't help me worth a tinker's whoop. I can never see it or think of it now without being reminded of kerosene. One night we all got pretty unconscious on it, and thought we were back in Canal Street, 'Frisco, but the next morning I'll bet there wasn't a hat in the whole Russian Empire that would 'a' fitted our swelled heads. Poor old Puttkammer's was so enorm that all he could do was say 'Mein Gott,' 'Mein Gott,' 'Mein Gott.' I don't believe he said anything else that entire day."

"What kind of people did you meet while you were travelling along?"

## The "Won't Go Home"

"I can't give you their names now, but Puttkammer told them to us at the time. He knew the different grades and breeds of Chinks and Tibs as well as a cat knows her kittens. They were the weirdest-looking bunch I ever saw. If I'd seen 'em before I left 'Frisco, I wouldn't 'a' supposed that there was a dime's worth of business in the whole blooming lot, but nearly everyone of them is making money in one way or another. They dress like prehistoric gorillas, I swear they do. Course, we Yanks couldn't talk with them at all, but Putty, as we called him, chewed the rag with a lot of 'em. He said they were real interesting, but they didn't strike me that way. They always wanted to look at the 'Won't Go Home,' and I wouldn't stand for that. We had it covered up with a big flaming red cloth.

"It took us nearly two weeks to reach the place where the Tibs and Willson were to disappear into the desert. The road was bad, and we lost two days on account of monkeying with the vodka. I'll never forget how poor Willson looked when he bid us good-by—the rest of us were to go into Urga by the road we were on. Talk about thirty cents! He didn't look as if he were good for three. 'Freck,' he says, whispering to me, 'take this ring, and if anything happens to me, give Jess the ring and tell her 't I died like a soldier, will you?'

"I told him to brace up, handed him the ballerina outfit, and he and the Tibs and the 'Won't Go Home' disappeared to the west; they were to circle around a bit and then strike for the town by another path. We frightened the Tibs by telling them that if they let anything happen to Willson his mother-in-law would come down from the North Pole and raise the very devil with them. They told Puttkammer that they'd treat him just as if he were a god of their own, and we promised them all a little money when we met in town the next afternoon.

"I wish you could 'a' seen that meeting the next day. I'll never see anything more bughouse if I live to be a hundred. We were in the market-place waiting, and all of a sudden we heard the 'Won't Go Home' in the distance playing ragtime. The tune was about as appropriate in Urga as it would have been in a church. I had told Willson to play 'Where is my Wandering Boy To-night?' or something like that, but he told me afterwards 't all he could think of was ragtime—and he ragged for fair too. I thought the old thing 'ud blow up, and the natives rubbered and ran about the place like crazy people. Pretty soon the 'Won't Go Home' and Willson and the Tibs loomed up. They were all covered with dust, and Willson looked about as much like a North Pole god as a wet cat does. The ballerina skirt was up around his breast, and the old bonnet 't I gave him was hanging around his neck by the ribbons. He'd no sooner caught sight of us than he began to play all the harder, and by the time he'd got well into the market-

place he was whooping it up with every old tune he knew at once, so it seemed. The crowd gathered around like flies around molasses, and I thought there was going to be a scrap at first, but Puttkammer said the people were just curious.

"Then we all went to a caravanserai where Willson told us how things had gone with him. He said he got leary of the Tibs when it came night—he was nervous, you know—and he put on his ballerina outfit and sat up in it till morning in order to make an impression. That's the reason it looked so bum. I think he slept in it myself, but he'd never admit that. Anyhow, it was no good any longer, and we decided that we'd have to let up on Willson's coming from the North Pole and that rot, and just try to make a straight business deal with his Nibs

"I'd never seen a god before and didn't know how to behave in front of one, but Puttkammer said that he and I had better begin the negotiations with his Nibs, and the other boys could be introduced later. I was flabbergasted when I saw his Nibs. He didn't look any more like a god,—well, than you do. He was about thirty years old, and was togged up pretty much the way all the swell people dress in those parts. They say 't he's next to the big god in L'Hassa. He showed us his automobile, and some of the other things 't he'd had his leg pulled for, and then we sang him our song about the 'Won't Go Home.' This was what we'd brought Puttkammer along for, and he did it well. They say 't he's no good converting people to religion, but he certainly did tole that god along. Course, I couldn't understand anything that was said 'cause they used words that I ain't been in the habit o' keeping track of, but I could see by the god's eyes that he was keen on having the 'Won't Go Home.'"

"Did the god make you an offer on the first visit?"

"No, he didn't make any offer, but we did. We put the figure high, thinking he'd try to beat it down—twenty-five thousand plunks was what we asked. Then we told him what aristocratic musical pieces 'Won't Go Homes' are in the United States. This was my notion. Big guns like to have what other big guns have,—at any rate, I told Puttkammer that I thought so, and he told the god that every rich man in the States has an immense 'Won't Go Home' to put him to sleep at night. The god said he was troubled with insomnia a good deal, and we promised him a cure if he'd only be patient. He gave the 'Won't Go Home' a hearing the following evening. You'd 'a' died laughing. Willson played, 'Go to sleep, my little pickaninny,' soft-like, and the rest of us, except Puttkammer, whistled it afterwards."

"Did the god doze off?"

"No, he didn't do that, but he bought the tooter. Course, he beat us down, but we got a laundry ticket out of him for fifteen thousand

plunks. I was leary o' the paper at first, but Puttkammer cashed it into roubles through a big merchant 't he knew. It was as big as an American passport, and scribbled all over with Chinese writing."

The Englishman with the capital to invest appeared just then, and Freckleton stopped; but I called him aside before leaving and asked for news of Willson.

"Did he marry Jess or not?" I said.

"Marry Jess? No! She married an old pal of his while we were in Urga, and Willson is now on his way to L'Hassa. You remember that phonograph he was working on in St. Petersburg? Well, he got a Tib to talk a lot of religious stuff into it, and he thinks he's going to make his everlasting fortune. The Tib made out that he was a god talking, and Mat made him say: 'Bring me your gold—bring me your jewels—bring me all kinds of offerings.' He fixed up a number of cylinders, and he was going to rig out a dummy god with the phonograph inside of it, and set 'em both up near some public road."

"How does he expect to get away with the stuff that the natives bring his god?"

"Heaven knows, I don't. He's got a bit daffy since Jess threw him over, and he's been reading Landor's book besides. He wanted me to go along with him, but I said 'Nay, nay, Pauline, I'm going to Europe.' If I can sing 'On the Road to Mandalay' to some other tenderfoot, send him east, and make money out of it, I'll do it, but I like my comforts too much to go out there again myself."

At the present moment Freckleton is president of the "Siberian General Development Company, Limited," and if rumor is to be trusted his agents are unloading American "goods" on gods and others throughout Mongolia.



## SO STRONG IS LOVE

BY MARY APPLEWHITE BACON

STOOD Love with eager eyes,  
 Bearing in one hand frankincense for her,  
 His spotless saint, in one hand bitter myrrh,  
 And watched the anguish in her young face rise.

Rise and dissolve. Not loth  
 She clasped at last the bitter and the sweet,  
 —So strong is Love—and patiently made meet  
 In her soul's sacristy a place for both.

# THE FIFTH WHEEL

*By Ina Brevoort Roberts*

*Author of "Her Day of Freedom," "The Lifting of a Finger"*



DINNER was drawing to a leisurely close. A little breeze, welcome after the heat of the day, came in through the lace curtains and swayed the flowers on the table, around which sat Arkwright and his wife and their guest, Oliver Carlton.

There were not many evenings nowadays when Oliver was not in what had grown to be called "Mr. Carlton's place." In town he was always dropping in on some pretext or other late in the afternoon, and they had fallen into the habit of expecting him to remain to dinner.

Here at their summer home other guests came and went, but Carlton stayed on, occasionally going up to town for a few days, but always returning sooner than he had intended.

That he liked to be there was scarcely to be wondered at. The Arkwrights were a charming couple: young and rich, besides having a delightful way of making their guests welcome.

As for Carlton, that young man talked business with Arkwright, discussed books with his wife, and was in many ways a pleasant person to have about.

Mrs. Arkwright rose with the gentle grace natural to her and moved towards the door, her husband and Carlton following. These two never lingered at the table after she left it.

In the hall Arkwright left the others, turning his steps in the direction of the library. His wife's eyes followed him.

"Won't you come out to the garden with us?" she asked; "it is cooler there."

"Yes, do come," urged Carlton; "it's much too warm to stay in the house."

Arkwright shook his head; he had letters to write, he gave as excuse. Carlton and Mrs. Arkwright passed out to the cool darkness of the garden, while the master of the house went into the library, not to write, but to sit and think, with eyes staring at the light and one hand idly drumming on the desk before him, of the pair who were in the garden—discussing books, he told himself with an odd, bitter smile.

There had been a time when Arkwright was wont to joke among their friends about the congeniality of his wife's and Carlton's tastes, and to protest that he was growing jealous, but that was long ago, before his eyes were opened to the truth.

He wondered how long the—it had gone on before he had found it out, how long he had been that most pitiable of human beings, the man who is being fooled.

There was no bitterness in his heart towards her, only deep pity and a keen regret that he had persuaded her to marry a man she did not love.

She had told him this quite frankly before their marriage, but it had not made him afraid. In time, he was confident, he would be able to win her heart; such love as his must beget an answering love, he reasoned in his folly.

He had been very gentle with her during their few years of married life, very careful to hold his overwhelming passion in check, lest he frighten away the love for him that might be growing in her heart. But never for a moment did he lessen his efforts to win that which was to make his life beautiful.

In the meantime he had endeavored to content himself with trying to make her happy, and he had thought he was succeeding—until Carlton came. It was then he had learned how bright her eyes could be, how light her laugh.

In spite of his pain, Arkwright found something ludicrous in the knowledge that Carlton had succeeded where he had failed, he who in the outside world was called a successful man, while Carlton—well, there was nothing against Carlton, but then there was nothing *to* him either, Arkwright thought.

As yet neither of the pair suspected that he knew. He had gone on as usual letting them, if they took the trouble to think about the matter, believe him still the fool.

He had a vague feeling that this pretence of being blind was not the straightforward course (and Arkwright above all things had always prided himself on being straightforward), and yet, after all, what could he do? What was there to do?

Had he lived a hundred years before he would no doubt have killed the man who had wronged him, but the time had gone by when men acted first and reasoned afterwards, and what good would it do if he did kill Carlton? Would it make any of them happier—or better? Assuredly, no.

Arkwright had no fear that his wife would go away with her lover; he knew her too well not to be sure that conscience would hold her to the letter of her duty even though she failed in the spirit of it.

He might, of course, tell Carlton that he knew and forbid him the house, but he had a strange repugnance to this course. In spite of the other man's share in the affair, it seemed like discussing an intimate matter with an outsider.

Then too Edith would wonder at Carlton's absence, and perhaps guess the reason for it: no, he must think of some other way; his wife must be spared the pain of learning that he knew.

Perhaps sometime in the near future Death would solve the difficulty. Arkwright hoped so and, since he seemed to be a fifth wheel, that he would be the one to go, which was unselfish of him, when one considers that he was well and strong and did not want to die.

He did not blame Edith,—such resentment as he felt was all for Carlton,—but it hurt him to have to think of her as a hypocrite. Why need she have urged me to go to the garden to-night? Why need she always go through the pretence of asking me to accompany them everywhere? he muttered angrily, as, unable to remain still any longer, he rose and left the room.

Outside on the porch he was pacing impatiently up and down when he caught sight, just inside one of the long, open windows, of his wife's slender figure. An impulse which he wished to resist but could not made him pause in his walk and step through the window.

The room was in darkness except for the faint, clear starlight, but Edith was seated so that this fell full upon her face. Carlton was not there.

Arkwright dropped into a seat in the shadow. His wife must have been aware of his entrance, but she did not speak for some time. Finally she said: "I am glad you are here. I have something to say to you, something that I fear will hurt."

Arkwright drew a long breath. Was she going to tell him that she loved Carlton?

He looked about him. It was a pretty picture, a romantic scene. Upon one side the dim outlines of the luxurious room, on the other the garden and the white-pillared porch; he sitting in the shadow, his wife close to him, daintily beautiful in her white gown, telling him that she loved another man.

Mrs. Arkwright broke the silence. "I want to tell you that we cannot go on as we have been," she said. "I suppose," she went on in the same soft tone, "you think that you love me. No, don't speak yet. I know what you would say: you want to swear that you worship, adore me, that I am the one woman in the world to you, but I have come to feel that mere words do not count for much. It is acts that tell the story. Had you really loved me you would never have told me so."

Arkwright set his teeth hard. Was she going to reproach him for



having persuaded her to marry him? Well, he deserved it, he supposed.

"Why did you do it?" she questioned, with more passion, more anger, in her voice than he had supposed her capable of feeling. "Why did you force yourself into my existence? I was happy enough as I was, as happy as a woman can be who has never loved."

Arkwright winced.

"But there, I must not be unkind to you." Her voice had grown indescribably tender. "After all, you are not more to blame than I; indeed, not so much, and I know you are sincere in thinking that you love me. I thought I loved you too—once. But now I know that it was not you I loved. In accepting your attentions I was only yielding to the desire every woman has to be made much of, to have thought, devotion, showered upon her. What I mistook for love was merely being glad that you, someone, anyone, cared for me. It was comparing you with him that made me realize this. Had he been in your place he would never have told me that he loved me; he would have gone away and suffered in silence."

Arkwright stirred impatiently in his seat. Why could she not have spared him a little? It was bitter enough to be reproached with his own shortcomings without having to hear her lover's praises sung. Besides, would Oliver have done these things? Arkwright thought not.

His wife leaned forward and laid a hand on his arm. "You don't know how I hate to have to say all this," she whispered.

Arkwright shook her hand from his arm.

"Of course, you are angry with me, but isn't it better for me to tell the truth? I do not love you; I love him."

The way she said the last three words made Arkwright dizzy with pain. It showed him how she could love.

"Of course, I can never be anything to him now," Edith went on, "for you will always stand between us; that is my punishment; but it is only fair to him that you should go away."

Arkwright did not speak; indeed, he could not, for something came into his throat and choked him.

His wife went on talking. Would she never stop, he wondered. How much more was there for him to hear?

"I know it is a good deal to ask, but I should like to feel that you forgive me for telling you these unpleasant truths and for sending you away. It may be hard for you to go, but, believe me, you will find it harder to stay. I am sure of this because—if you loved me as—as I love him, you could never have borne it to be so much to me, and yet so little. I think I felt this in a vague way from the first. That is why even when I thought I loved you I would not tell you so."

Arkwright drew a sigh of relief. He was glad she was telling

all this to him and not to Carlton. It meant much to him to be able to believe in her again.

His wife rose to her feet. “Come,” she said in a voice she strove to make matter-of-fact, “we must not stay here any longer. He will be wondering where we are.”

Arkwright rose too, and together they moved through the darkness towards a curtained doorway. Just before it Edith paused and he felt her hand upon his arm again. “I am sorry, Oliver, I am indeed,” she whispered.

Oliver! Arkwright felt a sudden dizziness. Oliver! She had thought he was Oliver Carlton all this time. Why—then she must have been talking about *him*—her husband. She must love *him*!

After a moment, when his mad exultation had given way to a great peace, Arkwright took his wife’s hand, and, lifting the curtain, drew her into the lighted room beyond.



# “WHO KNOCKS?”

BY FLORENCE EARLE COATES

|                                             |                                        |
|---------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| WHO knocks at the door so late, so late—    | “Yet woe the waiting heart,” she said, |
| Who knocks so late at the door?             | “And the heart it waiteth for!         |
| Is it one who comes, as a stranger comes,   | And woe the truth and wasted youth     |
| Or one who has knocked before?              | That nothing shall restore!—           |
| Is it one who stays with intent to bless,   | The faith that’s fled, the hope that’s |
| Or one who stands to implore?               | dead,                                  |
|                                             | The dreams that come no more!”         |
| “My days have been as the years,” she said, | Who knocks at the gate—so late, so     |
| “And my heart, my heart is sore:            | late?                                  |
| Love looked in my face with a wistful grace | Thou foolish heart, be still!          |
| One happy spring of yore,—                  | What is’t to thee if love or hate      |
| Looked in my face for a moment’s space,     | Knocks in the midnight chill?          |
| And left me to grieve ever more!”           | Art thou, poor heart, compassionate?   |
|                                             | Is love so hard to kill?               |
| Through all the days the door stood wide,   | “Ah me! the night is cold,” she said;  |
| For hope had breathed a vow                 | “Would I might all forget;             |
| That love should not be kept outside:       | But memory lives when hope is dead,    |
| The years wore on, and hope hath died;      | And pity heals regret;                 |
| The door at last is barred and fast,—       | As light still lingers overhead        |
| Why comes this knocking now?                | When sun and moon are set.             |

# THE HIDDEN MAN

*By Karl Edwin Harriman*



## I.

**H**IS name?

Red Riley asked him that during the afternoon of the first day "M' name's 'Umpstead," he replied with a growl that did not fit the grin he wore. "They call me 'Appy 'Umpstead."

Then he shuffled up to the bar and, casting his eye along the row of slim-necked bottles on the shelf behind, said, "Gimme a drink."

Red waited until the stranger spun a nickle on the walnut before he asked,—

"Whattel it be?"

The man's eye was upon one of the pale green bottles. "Wot's that?" he grumbled, indicating the decanter.

"Gin."

"Thattel do."

He poured two fingers, drank it neat, and shuffled back to the corner by the stove, where he had sat, silent, all the morning, to the great curiosity of Riley and the wonderment of certain of his customers, who from time to time had dropped in to wet their whistles during the day.

Whence came he?

No one knew. It never occurred to Riley to ask.

Whither was he going? Riley did put that question to him across the bar nonchalantly, polishing a glass the while. The stranger lifted his heavy blue eyes, let them rest on Riley's florid face, and, clearing his throat, thickly replied,—

"T' hell, likely."

Knowing the road and the way, Riley did not seek further enlightenment.

"D' know who he is," he said to Tony from the commission house across the street later in the evening. "Bin a-settin' there by th' stove all day; ain't said nothin' much. Bought a drink er two, but that's all. Ever see him 'fore?"

Tony shook his head. "He ain't a good looker," he muttered. "Better keep an eye on 'im. Think he's a sailor?"

"Sure. Layin' off; drifted down here, likely, so's t' be on hand when navigation opens. Consid'able of a wait, eh?"

Tony laughed and counted on his fingers: "February, March, April. Three months 'less they's a ice-jam in Ste. Claire."

And Tony went away and forgot.

All the evening the stranger sat there by the stove. Most of the time he hummed, grumbling, to himself. Once he lifted his voice and Riley, behind the bar, made out the words he sang,—

"I've sailed from Lake Superior,  
Way down t' Buffalo;  
But what's become o' Mary Jane  
Is what I'd like t' know."

Distinguishing the words, Riley grinned. He knew the song; it was about a schooner and a woman. Many a time, during the summer, had men from the craft tied up in the river taken on fresh cargoes in his place, and sung it until the smoky ceiling seemed about to lift and soar away into the blue-black sky above.

The next day came, and with it the stranger back again.

"Say," said he, "wot say'e t' lettin' me clean out fer a dime?"

"Nothin'. Go on," Riley replied, and showed him where the broom was. After that it became his task each morning to sweep the floor and shovel the snow away from the door, when there was any to shovel, for a week. For at the end of the week something happened. Riley didn't know of it until afterwards. Tony told him. And his comment was,—

"Th' feller never looked straight t' me, 'n' I ain't surprised." For Red Riley was what you might call a moral man, even if he did "run" the toughest saloon along the entire River Front.

## II.

It was Ash Wednesday.

I mean that statement to be quite as general as it sounds. For it was just as much Ash Wednesday in Red Riley's saloon as in the little barren Mariners' Church across the way over the commission house, where Tony rolled barrels and thumped crates and sorted cabbage-heads from seven in the morning until six at night.

Only Red Riley didn't know it was Ash Wednesday, whereas the Reverend Paul Morton did. To be sure, there was a dodger pasted to the swinging door of the saloon inside which read:

"NOTICE!  
ON THE EVENING OF FEB. 14,  
AT EIGHT O'CLOCK,  
THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF  
DAILY LENTEN SERVICES  
WILL BE HELD IN  
THE MARINERS' CHURCH,"

but Riley hadn't given it more than a passing glance.

"You don't mind my putting it up?" the clergyman had asked in his thin, hungry little voice that same morning.

"Shure not!" Red had blurted; and the dodger had been posted accordingly.

The Reverend Paul Morton was a sad-faced, thin-lipped little man, whose trousers were frayed at the heels and baggy at the knees. His whiskers, reaching half-way to his chin, were pale as his mild blue eyes. For three years he had kept together body and soul—and the bodies and souls of a wife and seven children—on the scant salary allowed him out of the church endowment. He accepted the crust uncomplainingly, almost gladly. Instinctively resenting his mildness, which was almost cringing, the denizens of the River Front nevertheless stepped back to the curb and grinned whenever he passed them, with a pale little smile and a faint bowing acknowledgment of the courtesies.

"Don't you think you can come, Mr. Riley?" he asked drearily after he had put up the poster.

"Well, say, wouldn't be surprised if I could," Riley replied, knowing whilst he spoke that he would not.

"We should be glad to see you," the minister went on; "and bring any of your friends. We shall have excellent music. I am sure you would enjoy it. A Sargeant of the Salvation Army is going to sing. She promised this morning. And Mr. Cleaver, of St. Andrew's, is going to play the organ for us. It will be very fine." He crept out of the saloon, closing the door just in time to miss hearing Riley exclaim:

"I wish that dum little cuss 'u'd git a couple o' drinks in him. I b'lieve it 'u'd make a man of 'im, yet."

The stranger shuffled into the saloon not two minutes after the minister, having dodged two great horses, had ducked into the stairway leading to his church across the street.

The stranger was agreeably drunk. Wishing to be drunker, he approached the bar and slid a quarter across the sticky board.

Riley examined the coin before he set out the pale bottle.

"Oh, ish a'righ'," the other mumbled thickly.

He used the change to the best purpose—bought until there was nothing left. Then he shambled across to the stove and sat there a space in silence.

It was a cold day. The papers said "snow before morning." Business was light at Riley's. The proprietor stood looking out into the street. As he idled thus strains of harmony fell upon his ear and he turned. The stranger, rocking to and fro, was blowing a mouth-organ. The instrument was wheezing the air he had sung the first day. Riley wagged his head in time with it. When he finished the stranger looked up and his heavy eyes met Riley's, and he grinned foolishly.

"Gosh! Yeh know how t' blow it, donche?" Riley said. The musician nodded.

Then he struck up another air, quicker than the first, and played it through, lifting his eyes to Riley's again, drunkenly, at the end.

Riley came around the end of the bar and, drawing up a chair, sat beside the stranger.

"Blow some more," he said.

"Here's one I betche don't know," the player mumbled. He closed his eyes. Riley sat transfixed during the performance.

"Ditche know it?"

"Sounds kind o' f'miliar; can't seem t' place it, save me."

The stranger chortled with delight. He reached out a shaking hand and made to clutch the saloon-keeper by the arm.

"'S one on yeh," he chuckled.

"What was it?" Riley demanded.

"'Near'r God t' Thee; an' yeh didn't know't." He was overcome with delight and rocked back and forth, while strange, unmeaning sounds issued from his throat.

Chagrined, Riley got up and went back behind the bar. The stranger stowed away the instrument and fell to humming. In the afternoon he was away for a while, and when he came back to the chair by the stove he had no word for anyone, though three or four men who had braved greeting him now and then when they encountered stood at the bar.

"Looks kind o' down in th' mouth," Tony observed.

"Gittin' over his drunk," Riley muttered. "Mean sorter cuss, I reckon, at times; but Gawd, yeh oughta heard him play th' mouth-organ."

"S'pose he'd blow us one if yeh ast him?" Tony inquired curiously.

"Say, partner," Riley called across the bar, "git out that old blower o' yourn an' let 's have a tune."

The stranger shook his head.

"Aw, go on," one of the men added encouragingly.

"Shure, play some'pin'," Tony put in.

The musician succumbed to their persuasion. He took out his instrument and, wiping it on the sleeve of his rusty coat, placed it to his lips. He played three tunes through without stopping. At first the loiterers at the bar had looked from one to another surprisedly, but shortly all their attention was centred upon the man by the stove, who rocked as he played.

When he had done his audience applauded enthusiastically. With no acknowledgment, he stowed the instrument away again and lapsed into silence. Considerable whispering ensued at the bar. Presently Riley said: "Say, partner, th' boys wanta know if yeh'll play if they

come down t'night. Will yeh? We'll have a show. Tony, here, c'n dance, 'f you kin play a clog. Will yeh?"

The stranger nodded without looking up. The word was passed along the Front. Every cabbage-sorter from Beaubien Street to Wayne promised himself to "take in" the concert at Red's that night, and every promise was kept.

At seven o'clock the little bar-room was filled. At half-past seven the concert commenced. Riley had provided the stranger with a flask of gin, which he held between his knees as he played. His first selection was accorded its deserved applause. The next, a more solemn number, was less heartily received. Then Tony was thrust into the circle that had formed about the stranger and was told to clog. The musician struck up a jig. Tony's feet flew. The crowd swayed rhythmically. Faster and faster wheezed the instrument; faster and faster flipped the feet of Tony; but just before the grand flourish at the end the door was pushed open and a voice, shrill, penetrating, piped:

"Mr. Riley! Mr. Riley! Is Mr. Riley here, pray?"

It was the voice of the Reverend Paul Morton. Those nearest the door pressed back that he might pass within. Almost without realizing it he stood in the centre of a thick circle of faces.

"Just a little concert f'r th' boys," Riley said, grinning.

"Yes," the little minister replied, smiling faintly, "I understand—now. You see, when eight o'clock struck, and no one appeared at the church, not even Mr. Cleaver, of St. Andrew's, who promised me faithfully he would preside at the organ, I thought there might have been a mistake. I encountered the Sargeant of the Salvation Army, who was to sing, as I was leaving the church. She is waiting in the corridor now. I came over to ask you all if you would not like to come with us. We shall have just a brief service. It is to be regretted that no one is to preside at the organ, but the Sargeant will no doubt sing quite as well. Would you care to, gentlemen?"

He swept his pale blue eyes around the circle. The faint smile still lingered about his lips.

Indicating a crack with the toe of his boot, Riley said: "Well, it's like this, part—I mean, Mister Morton; th' boys, yeh see, jus' dropped in t' hear this feller blow th' mouth-organ. He's a peach—I mean he blows it fine; but I s'pose if th' boys wanta——"

"What's th' matter with th' feller takin' his mouth-organ over t' th' church?"

Perhaps it was genius that prompted this question from the outer rim of the circle, perhaps it was meant to be a sally of wit; but it caused the pale blue eyes of the frail little clergyman to leap and take to themselves a sudden light.

"The very thing!" he exclaimed eagerly. "The very thing! Will you come?"

He looked down at the stranger, who returned the glance, appealingly. He did not reply, so the minister said, "So you will; it will be just the thing."

Riley never knew precisely how it all came about, but as he stood there, marking the crack in the floor with the toe of his boot, the stranger, the mild little minister, and the crowd disappeared; and he was left alone in his own bar-room.

### III.

THE Reverend Paul Morton, his thin hand grasping firmly the arm of the half-dazed stranger, led the way of the strange procession up the dark stairway into the dimly lighted church above. The followers slouched into the seats nearest the door, but the minister did not halt until he reached the chancel rail. Behind him had walked the Sargeant who was to sing, a woman in the plain garb, the banded bonnet, of her Army.

"Ah," said the clergyman, "and do you think you can play here? Light doesn't make much difference to a mouth-organist, perhaps. I suppose you don't use notes?"

The stranger shook his head. He looked about him, into the deep shadows, into the corner at the left, where stood an organ.

"Shall I play that 'un?" he murmured dreamily.

The Reverend Paul Morton stepped back. "Can you?" he exclaimed.

"What d'yeh want me t' play?" the man asked.

"Oh, ah, 'Nearer, My God, to Thee,' if you happen to remember the air; and, ah, let me see, 'I Know that my Redeemer Liveth,' and, ah, oh, 'Lead, Kindly Light.' Do you—that is to say, shall you—need the notes, for I——"

"No," and the stranger slipped away into the deep shadow of the corner, whence came suddenly, as though from the throat of the darkness, the strains of the first hymn.

"Oh, this is very nice! This is very nice indeed!" exclaimed the clergyman.

He vanished into the vestry-room, and appeared after a minute in the gown.

Deep silence was in the church, for the strains from the organ had ceased.

"It shall be a choral service only to-night," spoke the minister.

"First we shall listen to 'Nearer, my God, to Thee' on the organ, simply." He hesitated. "You may commence, please," he called, "you, Mr. —— at the organ."



The melody of the hymn rose until the room was filled with sound. Higher, higher. Softer became the strains and more pleading, until finally they ebbed away and were lost. The artistic instinct of the little rector prompted him to wait until the full effect of the music should have been realized by the congregation, which was crowded into four pews in the dim rear.

"And now," he said, "if the organist will play 'Lead, Kindly Light,' the Sargeant will sing."

The figure of the woman rose.

"One, two, three, commence," called the clerical director of this quaint service.

The organ pealed again, and in harmony with it rose the voice of the woman. There occurred suddenly a break in the accompaniment, and thereafter the music wavered—strangely, weirdly. The last bar. In the middle the organ ceased to give forth sound,—but the woman sang on. When she sat down and there was an end to her singing a queer noise fell upon the ear of the frail little figure in white behind the chancel rail. It seemed to come from where the organ was. He went there, and for a moment his gown made a splotch of white in the darkness of the corner. Then he walked back and came up the aisle.

"Gentlemen," he said—there was a quaver in his voice that had not been there before—"gentlemen, I regret exceedingly having to dismiss you with our service but half over, but, ah, the organist—please go quietly, gentlemen—please, now."

The woman had risen and gone to him. He felt her hand on his arm.

"You—don't go—he wants you." He spoke the words quietly, strangely calm, now, and walked farther up the aisle, which was choked, as, without words, the men were pressing through the narrow doorway. After the last had gone he closed the door and stood there, his hand upon the latch, as though guarding the entrance to his house of God. Presently two figures issued from the shadow where the organ was and came towards him up the aisle. He stepped to one side, and as they passed the man did not lift his eyes, but the woman did, and they met his fairly, and in them seemed to burn a fire. They merged into the darkness of the hallway and he closed the door. Then he walked slowly down the aisle and knelt before the altar.

#### IV.

ON Easter Day the Reverend Paul Morton delivered a sermon, in the course of which he told a little story. And while he spoke his eyes glowed and his face seemed to radiate the spirit that was within him. And the little story that he told concluded thus:

"For you see, friends, the man was the woman's husband, and she his wife. And when the storm that swept their lives had cleared away he had lost his path and she had found hers. He was miserable in the depths to which he'd sunk, whilst she—she was hopeful on the heights to which her faith had led her. And then one day a Providence which men call circumstance brought them once more within each other's ken,—and two souls that had drifted far apart were made one again in the sight of God, for such is the way of the Father that ye who have love one for the other shall be reckoned His disciples."



## THE MIDNIGHT MAIL

BY WILLIAM HURD HILLYER

**R**ESONANT, full, and deep  
 Is the voice of the Midnight Mail;  
 It rolls through the shadowy realms of sleep  
 When the high moon gleams on the rail.  
 It startles the drowsing oak,  
 And the clustered pines reply,  
 And the gray battalions of goblin smoke  
 Hang moveless under the sky.

But oh, not the lordly notes  
 That waken the dreaming hill,  
 Nor the cloud-white plume that backward floats,  
 Nor the clamor that warns, "I kill"—  
 Not the drifting smoke above,  
 Nor the transient furnace-glare,—  
 But the freightage of sorrow and joy and love  
 Which the Midnight Mail doth bear!

The great, swift wheels—the long  
 Yellow chain of squares agleam—  
 It is not for these that the poet's song  
 Is blent with the roar of steam.  
 Not the triumph of splendid arts,  
 Nor the prince of the passionless rail,—  
 But the anxious eyes and the beating hearts  
 That wait for the Midnight Mail!

# A JUDGMENT ON THEM

*By Jennette Lee*

*Author of "The Son of a Fiddler," "The Day Shall Declare It," etc.*



## I.

THE wind from the prairie struck across the small house. It rattled loose boards and slammed the shed-door with a harsh sound.

The two women in the room looked quickly. One of them shivered and drew a tiny shawl that she wore closer about her shoulders. Her cheeks were flushed a deep red, and her eyes had a strange, shining look. She was lying propped against some pillows on the bed.

The other woman glanced at her anxiously. "Cold?" she asked.

The sick woman shook her head. A spasm crossed her face. She shut her lips firmly, fighting back the cough; but it sprang out and choked her.

When the attack was over she lay back exhausted. Her eyes were dull and the color had gone from her face. The other woman left the room to bring in more wood.

A child seated on the floor among blocks of wood and bits of glass and mortar looked with suspended breath at the face on the pillow. Then she scrambled to her feet and, running across the room, kissed it softly.

The eyes opened and smiled feebly. They closed again.

The woman returned with the wood, which she put into the stove. She approached the bed, brushing bits of dust from her hands and apron. "Run and play," she said to the child. She spoke in a loud voice, but gently, and took the child by the shoulders to turn it towards the playthings on the floor.

With a quick, bright smile, the child nodded and ran back to its play.

The woman looked at the face on the pillow. The color was coming back. The eyes opened slowly.

"Better?" she asked.

"Yes." The lips moved slowly. "There will not be many more like that." The eyes regarded her dully.

The woman shook her head. "No, you won't suffer much longer." The voice had a warm, comforting note in it.

The dull eyes wandered to the child on the floor.

The sun had come out for a moment and she had caught it on a bit of broken glass. She was flashing it along the walls of the room and cooing softly to herself, a strange, monotonous sound, but sweet and low.

The sick woman's eyes filled with tears. She brushed them impatiently aside. "I can't leave her," she said.

The other woman looked at the child. Her motherly eyes smiled down at it. "Your folks will take good care of her," she said.

A look of distrust crossed the sick face. "You don't know." She spoke bitterly.

The woman adjusted a pillow and smoothed the roughened hair with soft, generous touch. "They can't help it," she said assuringly. "She'd make anybody love her."

"They never forgave me."

"Because you ran away?"

"Yes."

"They won't lay that up against a child—not against a poor, afflicted child."

The bit of sunlight flashed and darted on the wall, and the child cooed softly, with the strange, monotonous sound.

The mother shivered a little. "Sometimes I think it's a judgment," she said to herself.

"A judgment?"

She nodded. Her breath came more slowly. She was breathing easier. "They haven't spoken to each other for ten years—father and mother."

"Not spoken——"

"They blamed each other—for my running away. One of the neighbors wrote me. And they won't speak."

"But they live together?"

"Yes, they live there—in the old house." There was a wistful note in the voice.

"They'll take her, then." The woman spoke with confidence. "An' they'll take good care of her. You'll see."

"Do you suppose I *shall* see?" she asked, fixing her gaunt eyes on the big face.

It beamed on her reassuringly. "I shouldn't a mite wonder if you did. Now drink this and go to sleep. The Lord can take care of dead folks as well as livin' ones, I guess. He isn't going to let a little deaf-and-dumb child like that suffer—not any more'n it has to."

With a comforted look the face turned to the pillow. The eyelids drooped softly and the woman slept.

## II.

AN old man stood in the snowy path, one hand holding a big shawl about his sloping shoulders, the other shading his eyes from the glare of light as they peered into the cavernous depths of an approaching stage.

"Got any live-stock for me?" the high voice piped shrilly above the wind.

The stage-driver smiled. It was a stiff smile and very red. He leaned back into the recesses of the stage and drew out a huge bundle of shawls and wrappings.

"There ye be." He deposited it in the old man's upstretched arms.

They shook a little as they received it.

"Right side up with care," said the driver jocosely.

The old man laughed tremulously. "Pay ye to-morrow," he said.

The driver nodded. "All right." He gathered up the reins and turned about in the crunching, shrilling snow.

The old man turned towards the house, the bundled figure held close in his arms. A face that had been pressed against one of the small window-panes flashed from sight.

He made his way to the back of the house, peering uncertainly, as he went, into the folds of the bundle. A pair of winking, childish eyes looked back at him.

When he opened the door a woman who was washing dishes at a sink across the room turned slowly about and looked for a moment at him and at the bundle in his arms. She did not speak or cross the room.

The old man returned the look, half-defiantly, half-pleadingly, it might seem. He crossed to a big chair by the stove and began to remove the wrappings. When the last one lay on the floor beside him a fair-haired child, with soft curls and wistful brown eyes, sat on his knee, gazing at him with a fixed, intent look.

The old man took out his handkerchief and blew his nose loudly. He took off his spectacles and polished them. His thin, pointed beard trembled a little as he readjusted them and peered at the child.

The woman at the sink stopped washing dishes and came across to the other stove. There were two stoves in the room, just alike. They stood side by side, a little distance apart. She stood by the other stove looking across at the child on the man's knee.

The child looked up and saw her. A wan smile came into her little face. She slipped from the knee and, running across, put up her hands.

The old woman stooped and caught her up. She smoothed the soft curls and patted the little hands and held her to her.

The child nodded with a pretty, bright gesture. After a moment she opened her mouth and pointed a small finger down her throat. Her face wore an intelligent, expectant look.

The woman looked at her in surprise. She peered into the child's throat and shook her head. "What do you want?" she said slowly. Her voice had an unused, hoarse sound.

The child repeated the gesture.

The woman looked at her doubtingly. Her glance strayed to the old man.

He had risen from his chair and hobbled across the room to a small pantry that opened out of it.

She watched him curiously as he bent over a stone jar and extracted a huge loaf of bread.

A look of incredulity and horror came into her face. She turned it sharply to the child. "Can't you speak or hear anything?" She spoke loudly. Her hoarse voice trembled.

For answer the child lifted a tiny hand to stroke the wrinkled cheek. She cooed softly.

The old man came out of the pantry, holding out a big slice of bread. It was thickly spread with butter and rich, sweet molasses.

With a cry the child reached out her hands.

The old woman placed her on the floor, and she ran quickly over to where the old man stood, smiling and holding out the tempting bait.

With a swift sound in her throat the old woman turned away. She opened a door that led into a small room. It was a pantry, the duplicate of the one across the room. Reaching up to a high shelf, she took down a pan of milk. She poured some of it into a glass and, coming out, set it on a little stand on her side of the kitchen.

The child, taking big bites of the sweet bread, eyed it hopefully. The old woman nodded encouragingly, and she ran across to take it.

The old man went out into the back shed. Presently he returned, a child's rocking-chair held carefully in his hands. Wiping the dust from it, he placed it in front of the stove—his stove. The child looked at it, and he jogged it gently back and forth with his foot.

When the child had finished the milk she came across and sat down in the chair. And, sitting there in the warm kitchen, the two old people watching her, with faces half-awed and half-curious, rocking gently back and forth in the little chair, she fell asleep.

### III.

EARLY the next morning the old woman was astir. She swept and mopped her side of the kitchen floor and spread down a piece of bright carpeting in front of the stove. She brought down from

the garret a doll's cradle. It was made of wood and had a quaint wooden hood over one end. She placed it carefully on the bright carpet. She had brought down, also, from the garret a large corn-cob, which she dressed with calico and silk. She laid it in the cradle and stood back to survey the result.

The old man was hobbling stiffly about on his side of the room, cooking his breakfast and setting the table. He placed a small plate beside his own on the table, and, searching in the pantry for a smaller knife and fork, laid them proudly beside the plate.

His wife began to bustle about once more. She made coffee and set the table on her side of the room. She laid a little plate with a knife and fork beside her own and set up a high chair. A softened look suffused her face. The sun poured in at the east windows.

The bedroom door opened and the child came out, sleepy and half-dressed.

The grandmother finished buttoning the clothes, nodding to her and smiling and patting her as she worked.

The child responded with smiles. She had slept in her grandmother's bed and she felt at home with her. Now and then her glance strayed to the old man across the room. He was seated at the table, his back to them, eating his breakfast. When the child was dressed, she ran across to him and put up her face to be kissed.

He set down his teacup and, drawing the back of his hand carefully across his mouth, bent and planted a kiss on the soft cheek. He patted the plate beside him and nodded encouragingly.

The child shook her head and ran back to her grandmother. Seated in the high chair, a towel tucked under her chin and a big bowl of milk held in both hands, she sipped daintily. Her eyes travelled about the double kitchen with its two stoves and its two tables and its two sinks; they rested gravely on the old man and woman sitting, back to back, on either side of the room and chewing steadily.

Presently her glance fell on the cradle, and she slipped down to take possession of it. All the morning she played on the bit of bright carpet.

Her grandfather watched her as she played with a hungry light in his old eyes. About the middle of the morning he went out. When he returned he drew from his overcoat pocket a small parcel which he laid on the stove-hearth. He hung up his hat and coat and, sitting down by the stove, took up the parcel.

The child had ceased playing. She was watching him with round, earnest eyes.

The thin fingers untied the string and, rolling it into a ball, stowed it away in a pocket. Slowly the papers were removed. Two sticks of candy, red-and-white, shone in the sun.

He leaned over and laid one stick, the peppermint one, on the clean stove-hearth. With the other in his hand he limped to the clock-shelf and laid it beside the clock, one pink ring showing over the edge of the shelf.

The child had risen to her feet. When he was seated she came slowly across and held out her hands. The gesture was sweet and imperious, and the stick of candy was laid promptly in them. She stood sucking it gravely. She glanced over her shoulder to where the little rocking-chair stood against the wall. She brought it out and, placing it in front of the stove, seated herself sedately. She crossed her little feet and rocked placidly, taking comfortable bites from the stick of candy. When it was done she put up her cheek to be kissed and trotted back to the doll and cradle and the bit of bright carpet.

The old man's face wore a pleased look.

A little later the outside door opened with a whiff and a large woman blew in.

"Sakes alive!" she said, shaking out her skirts and stamping her feet to rid them of snow, "why didn't somebody tell me?"

She came over to the stove and held out her hands to the warmth. Her glance was fixed on the child seated on the bright carpet. "Never heard of it till ten minutes ago," she said. She looked at the old man.

He smiled proudly.

The grandmother had come to the child's side and was smiling too.

The woman looked from one to the other. "Don't it beat all!" she exclaimed. She was large and fat and human, and her eyes held a curious, sympathetic look. She was wondering whether the child had broken the silence of years.

"She don't look much like Myra," she said, looking again at the child.

The grandmother shook her head. "No, she favors my side. Myra was more like her father's folks."

The woman assented. "They haven't spoke yet," she thought, "not a word." Her kindly face was clouded. "What's her name?" she asked.

The old man and woman looked at each other. The woman glanced from one to the other. "Don't you know?" she said.

They shook their heads.

"Why don't you ask her? Here, little girl,"—she held out her hands with a comfortable smile,—“come here and tell me your name.”

The child came obediently and laid one of her tiny hands in the big one held out to her.



The woman drew her to her. "Now, tell me your name," she said reassuringly.

The child raised the other hand to stroke the face that bent towards her. She cooed in her throat, the soft, strange sound.

The woman started swiftly. The tiny hand dropped from her cheek.

"Can't she speak?" she demanded.

The old man shook his head.

"Nor hear?" she asked.

"Not a word," said the old woman. Her eyes, resting on the child's face, had a tender look.

The fat woman sank back in her chair. "Well!" she ejaculated. "Well!" she repeated after a space, "well!" She regained her breath.

"Didn't Myra ever write anything about it?"

"No," said the old woman.

"Was she born that way?"

"We don't know."

"You ought to see an ear-doctor." The woman spoke with authority.

The two old people started.

"Could he cure her, do you suppose?" asked the old woman doubtfully.

"He might. 'Twon't do any hurt to try. Laura's boy—— You know Laura? She married Jim Gleason, from over the Corner's way, and her little boy after he had scarlet fever was deaf as a post—for months. They took him to an ear-doctor down to Boston. He can hear as well's anybody now. That was fo—five years ago." She rose and drew her shawl about her, smiling down at the child's face. It was raised earnestly, as if following her words. "Ain't it a shame!" she said heartily. "I'll get the doctor's name soon's I can. Like enough he'll make her well. She'll be a lot of comfort to you yet, maybe." She spoke the last words with her hand on the door. The next moment it had closed breezily behind her.

#### IV.

Two weeks later the old man and woman, with the child between them, hurried up Boylston Street. They had walked from the station. It was a cold, blustering morning; but the child's red-mittened hands, reaching up on either side, were tightly clasped in warm gray ones; and her face, wrapped in a red scarf, showed only the tip of her nose and the wink of her brown eyes.

"It must be along here somewhere," said the old woman, looking doubtfully at the houses. "Tarbox—Dr. Tarbox—that's it." She led them up the flight of brown-stone steps. The next moment the big carved doors had shut them from sight.

The great Doctor sat looking at the child with dark, sympathetic eyes. He had unwound the red scarf and removed the red hood from the soft curls. He had peered into the small, shell-like ears with curious instruments. He had held his watch against them and he had probed gently in the dark cavities. Now he sat looking thoughtfully at the child.

"Has she ever heard sounds?" he asked.

"We don't know," said the grandmother stiffly.

"You didn't notice when she was little?" pursued the great man.

"No. We've only had her two weeks." The words came out slowly.

The Doctor looked up quickly. "You don't know, then, whether she had some illness, scarlet fever, the grippe—anything of that sort?"

"No, we don't know." The old woman spoke humbly.

The Doctor's face grew professional. "I see—I see." He was speaking softly to himself. He took up the instrument and reëxamined the interior of one of the ears, turning a fierce light into its depths.

The child's eyes regarded him gravely.

He smiled down at them, patting the upturned cheek. "Bring her to me three weeks from to-morrow," he said with decision. "I can tell you nothing without an operation. There is a growth. It may be congenital or there may have been an illness. I can't tell—the operation will determine. Good-morning. Three weeks from to-morrow—at ten, punctually."

Half an hour later they were travelling back over the route they had come. They sat silent in the train, watching the landscape whirl by. The child between them looked out on the snowy fields with happy eyes. She crooned softly to herself, and now and then she raised her hand to stroke a face on either side. The faces had lost something of their look of grimness. A kind of tremulous hope softened them. They had not looked at each other since the Doctor's words were spoken. It was almost as if they were afraid to look, lest something should give way.

When they reached home the child, tired with the journey, was put to bed early. The husband and wife sat in front of their respective stoves, rocking gently and thinking.

Once or twice the old woman swallowed quickly and her lips half opened. They closed again. But the look of grimness did not return. Once she got up and, going over to the water-pail, took a deep, eager drink. She stood by the pail, the dipper in her hand, looking out into the snowy world. A faint tinge was in the sky. She came slowly back to the stove and sat down. She grasped an arm of the chair firmly in either hand and sat erect. Her face worked. The old man by the other stove was lost in thought. His head was bent and his eyes were fixed dreamily on the chinks of light that played about the stove-doors.

"Hiram!" The hoarse word came like a challenge. It beat down the silence of years.

The old man looked up vaguely. He peered across in the uncertain light.

The figure before the other stove sat erect and rigid. Her gaze stared at space and her mouth worked harshly. "I—don't—think—you—was—to blame." The words came slowly, out of rebellious depths. "You didn't know—she'd take it—the way she——"

He had groped his way to her. "Don't, Hannah,"—his hand was seeking hers,—“don't say no more. I can't stand it!” He dropped to his knees and buried his face.

"I've got to say it—I can't stop." Her rigid gaze looked out over the bowed head. "I've said I never would, but I've got to. And I made up my mind—to-day—in the train—that if She could be made to hear, I'd tell ye I was sorry. Oh, an' I be, I be!" The stern figure shook, and she covered her breaking face in her hands.

The thin old fingers reached up and drew them down. "Don't you cry, Hannah, don't you cry. I can't stand it," he pleaded. "I'd ruther have you not speak a word than feel that way 'bout it. I knew ye loved me," he added gently, "right along. But you wouldn't speak, nor answer, an' I got out o' the way of it. But I knew—I knew. Now, don't you feel bad any more." He stroked her hair softly.

He got up stiffly and, going over, brought his rocking-chair and placed it beside hers on the bit of bright carpet. "There," he said, "that's where that belongs." He laughed tremulously.

"Hiram,"—she spoke in a half-whisper,—“do you suppose she'll be cured?”

He looked thoughtfully into the fire and rocked gently. "I don't know, Hannah, I don't know," he said at last. "But the Lord ain't going to punish a little child like that for our bein' fools. That's what you was worrying about, wa'n't it?"

"Yes."

He nodded slowly. "I thought so. I most always know what you're thinkin' 'bout. Don't you worry no more, Hannah. There ain't even a man mean enough to do that, and the Lord won't."

She gave a long, tremulous sigh. "It seems real good to hear you say it," she said humbly.

V.

Six years later a famous Doctor was driving slowly along the country road. He looked at the fields and woods on either side, and scanned the houses as they came in sight. He was looking for the home of a child on whom he had operated six years before.

He had been spending his vacation in a neighboring hill-town,

and it occurred to him this morning to drive over and look up the child. He had never forgotten her eyes, nor the stern faces of the grandfather and grandmother who brought her to him. He had often wondered whether the operation had been permanently successful and whether the child was happy. He had somehow suspected the tragedy under the two grim faces, and had thought of the child as living in the shadow of it.

A turn of the road brought into view a large, weather-gray house with long, sloping gables and a big elm over the front door. A gentle turn on the reins guided the horse towards the low, tumble-down fence. The Doctor leaned forward, looking with interest at the big house. The yard at the side was filled with trees and shrubs and tangled vines and a long, old-fashioned garden stretched away in the rear.

"Whoa," said the Doctor softly. A figure among the trees had caught his eye. It was an old man standing under a pear-tree, looking up into its branches. His face was gentle and contented and irradiated with a kind of soft happiness. A child stood at his side, gazing up at him admiringly.

The old man's eyes were fixed on a black mass that swayed and stirred in the upper branches. He looked down at the child. "Run and tell your grandma the bees have swarmed," he said.

The child ran obediently away. "Grandma,—oh grandma!" she called. Her joyous voice floated the call across the long garden.

The man brought a ladder and ascended the tree. When the child reappeared with her grandmother he was coming slowly down, the heavy branch held carefully in his hand. The bees buzzed sullenly about him, lighting here and there.

"Won't they sting him, grandma?" asked the child, breathless.

"Nothing stings him," replied the old woman proudly. "Shall I open the hive, Hiram?"

"Let Myra do it," said the old man, smiling; "she wants to learn."

With round eyes, half frightened and half awed, the child lifted the top of the hive.

Slowly the bees dropped into it, one by one, to seek the queen. Some of them still hummed dubiously about. They lighted on the child and on the old man and on the woman. But no one brushed them off and no one was afraid.

With a smile the great Doctor gathered up the reins and drove slowly away. "A very successful operation," he said to himself. He looked back at the old house and the three figures standing under the pear-tree, the light of happiness in their faces. "A very successful operation," he repeated softly.

## LONE SINGERS

BY PHILIP BECKER GOETZ

I SAW where one moved through a forest maze  
Grave as her trees and, like her tracery  
Of boughs, mysterious. Autumn had run  
Her thin, sharp fingers, swift as any knife,  
And cut the thread-thrung fates of bloodless leaves  
From off the stern stems of the parent stock,  
And filled the ways above their searching feet  
With heaps funereal. Softly he stirred  
The ghostly voices of the shivering leaves,  
And with bowed head found reverent utterance  
In prayer of pity, bodement, and defence.  
From out his meditative gloom dreamwise  
Upmounted from his wan lips melodies  
As bubbles swim through water to the air  
When Triton chants alone in some dim cave.  
And ever as he sang beside him dropped  
The spent waifs of the spring, breaking a spell  
The silence, then—no more. How soul leaned out  
At the release of song in airy freedom!  
How ardor of his singing so increased  
As called his fingers through his raven hair,  
Tears to his eyes, and swaying to his body,  
As if quick wings had clapped them on his shoulders  
And summoned him to empyrean height,  
To fellowship with what he strove to phrase!  
Yet once as through the dusk-lit branches thick  
Upward he looked and sang, he spied a bird,—  
A small, weak seer with eyes wide questioning,  
Tossing its body in distressful sign  
Of sympathy. Whereat he ceased and called  
To it: antiphonal began its lay,  
Unfellowed as his own, but mad with rapture.  
And when they parted where the world begins,  
Where anger of her busy noises quells  
The high endeavor to a mood divine,  
He knew that utterance of all his day  
Could never be more surely buried deep  
And lodged in chambers most oblivious  
Than in confession forth unto that world.

# THE UNDOING OF APOSTLE JONES

*By Lily Munsell*



N O, Jones was not the worthy's real name; for reasons which will be manifest I am loath to reveal his identity. He was led to his defeat through paths of pleasantness. It was a glorious spring,—warm, seductive, languorous. Lovers were whispering everywhere: in the leafy lanes at high noon, down the moonlit vistas, along the temple walls at night. Never was a time more favorable for the “turning of a young man's fancy.” And Apostle Jones, while not exactly a young man,—fifty-three can scarcely be considered the hey-day of youth,—still enjoyed the privileges and partook of the weaknesses of adolescence.

So it befell that the tender twitter of wooing sparrows, the wealth of bloom and young leafage, the gurgling of the mountain streams, aroused in his capacious breast a mighty yearning, which the three partners of his joys were powerless to satisfy—even Christine, the youngest, with whom he had tasted but five short years of wedded bliss, was losing her freshness, as he observed regretfully.

He began to reflect that he was not living up to his privileges—life was at best but a brief span, and after fifty decidedly uncertain; it was high time that he was enjoying his blessed religion to the fullest extent. He was greatly aided in reaching this conclusion by the black eyes of buxom Joanna Merrivale, and certainly their witchery might well sway a man's judgment, as many a younger swain in Zion was willing to testify.

John Alexander Jones had counted himself a lucky man when, a handsome stripling of twenty-five, he married the parson's beautiful daughter in his native town in Vermont. The first years of their married life were happy as marriages go. They had their tiffs, for he was stubborn and Evelyn proud, but never a serious difference until he embraced the Mormon faith. There was a scene then and a bitter one, but his will proved the stronger, and they came to Utah with the pioneers.

At this time Evelyn Jones was a hopeless invalid. She had never been a strong woman, and the privations and sorrows of this life in

the desert had broken her health. She bore her sufferings patiently, as she did her domestic trials. Gossip said she made no outcry, as most wives did, when her husband took another wife, but she bore him no more children. Two they had had already, a boy and a girl. Little Evelyn died of diphtheria at seven, but the boy, a proud, sturdy lad, grew to manhood, and at twenty hid himself away on one of the wagon-trains bound for California.

His departure estranged his father and mother still further. The Apostle angrily accused his wife of inciting the boy to go, and she did not deny the charge.

Her hair whitened fast after that day, partly no doubt from ill health and the Utah climate,—hair has a trick of growing gray there,—but utter loneliness and many tears did not retard the process. She never wished her boy back, though her heart went out with rare tenderness to the lads and lassies around her, who were not slow in returning the affection. They dubbed her Mother Evelyn, and as Mother Evelyn she soon became known to the entire community.

The Apostle's second wife, Sarah Mary, was a stout, ignorant woman, who accepted her life as a necessity, with the average amount of wifely bickering, and his third plural, Christine, a pretty Swede, though high-tempered, was too much in awe of her liege lord and the church to rebel against their authority. On the whole, Apostle Jones had been fortunate in his matrimonial ventures. Had he been content with three wives, which everyone knows is a lucky number, or had he even adhered to his life-long habit of selecting blondes, this chronicle would probably never have been written.

But what man having once looked on Joanna's bright eyes and dark curls could ever again be content with blondes? Small wonder then that the Apostle, once more becoming addicted to bright ties and excessive shoe-polish, courted the fair Joanna with elephantine grace. And the fates favored him.

Joanna, like the famous Joan, was a born champion. She had been the patron saint of every forlorn cat and abused cur from babyhood, and it was, perhaps, this same quality which early attached her to lonely Mother Evelyn. A warm friendship sprang up between the two, and thrived until Joanna had fallen into a way of running in and making her her chief confidante in all her joys and perplexities.

So the Apostle found frequent opportunities of meeting her, while Joan soon found a perplexity confronting her which could not be carried to Mother Evelyn's ears. That she was perplexed, her fits of restlessness and abstraction proved beyond doubt. Her mother, a worn-out, spiritless woman, noticed this, and hearing reports of Apostle Jones's attentions,—for the doings of so great a dignitary could not escape notice,—tried to question Joan. But Joan, who was

evidently determined to settle for herself the desirability of becoming Mrs. Jones No. 4, had nothing to say. On the first day of June, however, the Apostle walked formally up the shady path to the Merrivale home, formally proposed, and was as formally accepted.

Mrs. Merrivale had watched the approach of the great man with a thrill of foreboding. That her handsome, high-spirited Joan should enter such a life seemed unendurable; yet, after all, what brighter prospect could she hope for? Better not to taste young love than to learn its bitterness, as she herself had done. Still, she could not be reconciled to the marriage nor bring herself to deck the girl for her bridal, and when the wedding-day came she feigned illness to avoid being present at the ceremony.

"Perhaps it's all for the best, Joan," she had said; "I'm not saying it isn't, but when I look back on my own happy wedding-day I can't see you married to this man, who can't cherish you without insulting the best woman that ever breathed."

"That's just it," exclaimed Joan in reply. "I ain't afraid to marry the old fellow. I'd rather be an old man's darling than a young man's slave any day, but if I thought it'd hurt dear old Mother Evelyn I'd put my right hand in the fire first. But he never goes nigh her anyway, if he can help it, and I can see to it that she's a lot more comfortable than she is now. You needn't be afraid but what I'll get along with Apostle Jones—he'll not boss me round as he has Sarah Mary and Christine, I can tell you!"

The mother could only sigh at the girl's confidence. Oh blessed ignorance of maidenhood, what a price you oftentimes pay for innocence!

"As for happy marriages," Joanna continued, "there ain't none in this country. So cheer up, Mumsey. Just think what it'll be to have an apostle for a son-in-law, and you shall have some of the comforts of life too in your old age."

The mother's was not the only protest. There was a lover in the case, and he plead eloquently against this desecration, but in vain.

"I'll not deny I'm fond of you," Joan answered him, "and if we were back in the dear old Vermont mother tells about I'd marry you in a minute, but I can't trust you here, Hyrum. You're over-fond of a pretty face. When the bloom had left mine you'd be taking another wife, just like the rest of them. I couldn't stand that. I'd not care with Apostle Jones."

"Joan, let's go to the States then; but I'd never have no other wife, no matter how hard the elders preached!"

"That's what father said, but he broke my mother's heart just the same. As for going to the States, how could we go?"

So the deed was done, and it is to be hoped that the recording



angel dropped the traditional tear over this ruin of another young life, but it caused not a ripple of pity in the community of the saints. Nor did its victim consider herself an object of pity, any more than does Miss Blank who marries millions or a title.

Apostle Jones was thrifty, but this event called for munificence. The eastern façade of his one-story mansion was decorated with yet another door with its quota of windows, while the plush sofa and bright-flowered carpet of the little parlor were the envy of the neighborhood and a sad thorn in the flesh to Sarah Mary and Christine, who drew suddenly nearer in the face of this new calamity.

Mother Evelyn beheld these preparations unmoved. The fountain of tears was dried, she said to herself—her husband was nothing to her now. But she loved Joan, and suffered a pang that the girl should be willing to supplant her even in appearance. This too passed when Joan flung herself penitently at her feet and, sobbing, begged her forgiveness if she were robbing her further of her rights. "For he's your husband!" she exclaimed, springing up, flushed with shame; "me and these other women are——" She could not say the word. Joan, the wife, had changed her views on the subject of wedlock.

Mother Evelyn drew the girl again to her side and gently stroked the rich black hair. "You have robbed me of nothing, my dear. The man I married is long since dead. You are a good girl, and you could hardly have refused the Apostle safely. Power counts for right here. So come and see me often, but never mention him again."

Joan took up her new life bravely. If there were dark hours in the night when she lay and writhed with shame as she thought of her relations with the man beside her, or if there were other hours scarcely less dark when tender dreams of a love that might have been stole into her mind, she kept the fact to herself. These belonged to the night, when weariness and gloom steal the purpose from our hearts; morning found her resolute and cheerful, and few who saw her, blithe and self-contained, dreamed that the bonds of plural wedlock rested heavily on handsome Joan.

But a cloud no bigger than a man's hand was stealing over the Apostle's horizon. Who ever heard of a wife, young and petted, demanding equal favors for the rivals she had supplanted? Did the Apostle bring home a basket of fruit for his love, she must immediately divide it with Sarah Mary and Christine, after slipping the finest pieces into Mother Evelyn's larder. Did he bring her a new ribbon, she begged him not to fail to remember the others soon. The thrifty patriarch was sorely troubled over this generosity, for there is a wide difference between providing the frivolities of life for one and furnishing the same to four, with a contingent of rapidly growing children. The great man at length felt called upon to remonstrate with his be-

loved Joanna; but when did a bewitched lover of fifty-five ever remonstrate with a handsome woman of twenty-five with any success?

Joanna was perverse and she was winning, with the result that Apostle Jones opened his purse-strings to an unheard-of extent, while he groaned in secret. But the time came when he was forced to take a stand. He had gone the rounds with new dresses and bonnets with what grace he could muster, he had quadruplicated some of the luxuries of Joanna's rooms—at a slightly reduced figure, it is true, owing to the quantity—without betraying too much annoyance, but when his provoking bride responded to his proposition to build her a separate home with the counter-proposition that he should build the separate home for Mother Evelyn and another larger house for herself and the two younger wives, he felt that indulgence had gone far enough, and no coaxing or cajoling could change his decision.

It was then the clouds began to form in threatening masses, for Joan knew that not to rule was to be ruled, and rallied her forces for the final battle. Nor did she scorn to enlist Sarah Mary and Christine as recruits; as for Mother Evelyn, she tried to keep the matter secret from her.

The voices of the other wives, while they added to the Apostle's annoyance, failed to move him, and when one day he brought home plans for a handsome residence over which, he assured her, she was to reign sole mistress, she planned a coup d'état.

And the domestic clouds whose gray masses had tempered the glare of the Apostle's happiness grew yet darker and more lowering.

What man can endure a bad cook? And when it comes to three bad cooks in regular succession, when one goes from burned potatoes to overdone beefsteak, and from overdone steak to sour bread in ceaseless rotation, and when to these unsavory compounds are added complaints and coaxings and tears; when to further embitter existence come memories of halcyon days when appetizing meals and deference were the rule—it is enough to rouse a man's ire and to ruin his digestion.

The Apostle was shrewd enough to know that Joanna was at the bottom of the trouble, but he was also shrewd enough to prefer that punishment for the offence should fall elsewhere. He could not help admiring the ingenuity of her little scheme, though the fact did not tend to allay his wrath.

He first attempted to put a stop to the matter by some sharp words to Sarah Mary and Christine, but the only result was an unusually large fall of tears. They fled at once to Joanna, and, comforted and laughed at by her, contrived as many culinary accidents as before.

The Apostle tried every known means of chastening refractory wives, save one, but to no purpose. The rebellion against his rightful authority still went on. He even thought of invoking the authority of

the church, but ridicule is even worse than bad cooking. There were times when he even doubted the divine origin of plural marriage. Surely, never was a great man so flouted by the weaker vessel—nor by three of them—before.

The Apostle was in a fair way to become a misanthrope. He kicked the dog and snubbed his humbler brethren in Zion in a way that threatened to seriously undermine his popularity. He even caught himself profanely wishing that the All-seeing Eye over the "Holiness to the Lord" on the store fronts of the faithful might be utilized to regulate the affairs of his own household.

He began to think more favorably of the one untried means of curbing refractory wives. To strike a woman—a month ago the Apostle would have declared it infamous, but now—well—really, it seemed the only course open.

Then intruded the troublesome question, "Upon whom should the punishment fall?" Joan, of course, was the real culprit, but the vision of her lithe form and bewitching face that rose before him settled her fate—you cannot strike Hebe.

Well, then, Sarah Mary or Christine, which? They both really deserved it; here the Apostle's face hardened; but suppose he should bring them to their senses, there was still Joan unconquered. Was there no way of making her suffer by proxy?

Here the Apostle was seized with a most unlovely idea. Joan loved Mother Evelyn. Suppose the chastening should fall upon her? It would certainly show Joan the folly of her course as nothing else could. It would be something of a flank movement too. Still,—the Apostle winced at the thought,—it would soon be twenty-eight years since that night when, back among the Vermont hills, he had looked into Evelyn Wright's blue eyes and had whispered in a voice a trifle unsteady in its earnestness, "I would give my life to make you happy, dear."

The words were spoken on the eve of their wedding. They came back to him with tormenting force on his second wedding eve; but he was braver now, and allowed no such early indiscretions of speech or feeling to annoy him. Nor should we blame the doughty Apostle too severely. Then he might have died for her had it been necessary, but now—well, you know, years make a difference.

He need not really hurt her; it could be made a mere farce—the point was to have Joanna consider it a tragedy. The partitions were thin. Evelyn would be sure to shriek at the suggestion of a blow, which would bring the others to the scene, and it was more than probable that he could make terms with Joan without anything further. So he put aside his scruples and laid his plans astutely.

But alas! "the best-laid schemes . . . gang aft a-gley." It is well known that the female character is erratic, and even so experienced

a man as the Apostle occasionally errs in his estimate of it, and this error proved the sunken road that lost him his Waterloo.

As I have said, the Apostle laid his plans astutely. It required some cleverness to pick a quarrel with Mother Evelyn. He selected a suitable time when visitors were not likely to intrude, when the children were all at school; but the affair went off lamely from the start. Mother Evelyn had little to say, and when he mustered up courage to raise his arm for a blow, gave him a look that made it fall powerless to his side. Strange he could not forget those ten happy years when the word wife was sacred.

His angry tones had attracted Christine, who was not too fastidious to peep in at the keyhole, and who, when she saw his upraised arm, sped swiftly away with a terrified face to carry the news. Joan could scarcely believe her ears, but when she did realize the truth the blood suddenly left her face, only to rush back again in a swift tide, while her lithe form trembled with rage.

A moment later she snatched a small riding-whip from the wall and, followed by Sarah Mary and Christine, rushed to Mother Evelyn's room. The tableau there confirmed her worst fears, for the tears were streaming down Mother Evelyn's faded cheeks, and the Apostle stood hanging his head like a whipped dog.

Joanna waited not for explanations, but, exclaiming hotly, "I'll teach you how to whip a woman!" gave him five stinging blows with the whip, nor would have paused then had not Mother Evelyn flung herself between them. A marvellous thing is a woman's heart, and Evelyn Jones, who a moment before had believed the bitterest hour of her life was upon her, suffered a still more poignant anguish when she beheld her husband cower under Joanna's blows.

We will draw a veil over the scenes which followed. But a few months later Mother Evelyn, at the Apostle's special request, moved into a pretty home of which she was sole mistress, and while he held but little communication with her save through his banker, her declining years were attended by every comfort.

He took unto himself no more wives. Did he become reconciled to Joanna? Joanna was young, bright-eyed, round-limbed,—and the Apostle was a man.



## CANUTE

BY GEORGE S. SEYMOUR

NATURE no kingship knows nor lord's estate;  
 Against the sea no sceptre can prevail.  
 He only rules whose courage cannot fail,  
 And he alone is great whose soul is great.

## THE ROSE

BY MARIE VAN VORST

**N**EVER again, Dearest, oh never more!  
 Not in the spring-time's swift enchanted reign,  
 Shall hope to hope, shall love to love implore,  
 Never again!

Not in the summer—nor when autumn's wane  
 Blows the dry leaves along earth's windy floor,  
 Nor in the winter: that strange joy and pain

No seasons' circle ever can restore.  
 The roses of to-day no tears shall stain,—  
 They're thornless! You shall see the rose you wore  
 Never again!



## WHERE ARE YOU, DEAR?

BY MARIE VAN VORST

**W**HERE are you, Dear, now that the winter white  
 Has nearly run its course? Spring will be here  
 And birds shall sing as home they wing their flight,  
 "Where are you, Dear?"

Thus I have sung and waited thro' the year,  
 Saying at morning: "He will come with night?"  
 And in the night: "With the dawn kind and clear,

He will pass by!" My little dwelling bright  
 Has its soft curtains drawn; I wait the cheer  
 Your presence brings by day and candle-light;  
 "Where are you, Dear?"

# A PARK ROW GALAHAD

By *Albert Payson Terhune*

*Author of "Dr. Dale," "Columbia Stories," etc.*



MONDAY morning is not a pleasant time in the office of an evening newspaper.

The staff, who have spent Sunday as Providence gave them wisdom, or the lack thereof, are cross and tired. A lot of news has piled up during the past thirty-six hours, which means extra work. Add to this the gloom that accompanies Monday morning the world over, and you will have a fair idea of the atmosphere pervading the city room of the New York *Evening Planet* on the forenoon of a certain Monday in the year of Our Lord 1897.

The big apartment, light on three sides, was dotted with a miscellaneous collection of tables, roll-top desks, reporters' table-desks, and chairs in varying stages of disrepair. The high ceiling was criss-crossed with green-coated electric wires, from which hung shaded arc-lights. Other wires, painted yellow like walls and ceilings, ran blindly to and from telephone boxes and telegraph instruments.

The floor was thickly strewn with trampled, torn newspapers, crushed sheets of "fimsy" and "copy-paper," cigarette-stumps, matches, ashes, and letters.

Four copy-readers bent over their desks, editing early morning stories or putting "c. l. c." heads and "agate" marks on police headquarters slips.

The assistant city editor, a pleasant-faced man with a long blond mustache and childlike blue eyes, had finished making out the assignment schedule for the day and was handing clippings to reporters.

A clump of office-boys, their real work for the day not yet begun, loafed about the pneumatic tubes. A discontented reporter in one of the booths was taking down a story dictated over the telephone by the man in charge of the Brooklyn office. Three other reporters sat smoking, too cross to talk.

And over all the scene rested the aforesaid cloud of Monday-morning gloom.

This dreary aspect would be dispelled three hours later by the rush and bustle incident on "going to press." The *Planet*, being an evening paper, went to press for the first edition at eleven-thirty A.M. This was before the days when war exigencies enabled the public at large to buy "evening" papers at eight-thirty in the morning.

The city editor took the assignment schedule from his assistant and glanced over it.

"I see you have Brooke down for the Enfield embezzlement case," he remarked. "That's the star story of the day, if it pans out. Hadn't you better give it to some more reliable man?"

"Brooke's the best reporter we have, Mr. Curtis," replied the assistant, "if he's only sober."

"Is he ever sober?" retorted the city editor. "Look here, Wilton, I know Brooke's a friend of yours, and I appreciate all you've done for him. If you hadn't shielded and helped him along he'd have been fired long ago. But I've stood his drunkenness as long as I can. He's made us lose half a dozen good stories, and he's utterly untrustworthy. The man's been on a spree for four days, and I've decided to discharge him as soon as he comes back."

"He'll be back this morning, Mr. Curtis," interposed the assistant city editor. "I stopped at his rooms on my way down-town. He's sobering up, and he's thoroughly ashamed of himself. Would you mind giving him one more chance? Remember, he's one of the cleverest men in the business—when he's himself."

The city editor's face relaxed at the other's earnest manner.

"Well," he agreed after a pause, "if he shows up this morning and covers this assignment decently, I'll give him another show. But—There he is now."

Curtis broke off as a man entered the room and slouched across to the city editor's desk.

The new-comer's eyes were red and swollen, his breath was reminiscent, and his face had a pasty, unhealthy look.

His voice alone, when he addressed Curtis, showed him to be a man of breeding.

"I wish to report for work, sir," he said.

The city editor's eye took in all the details of Brooke's appearance.

"Are you fit for work, Mr. Brooke?" he asked.

The reporter flushed, but bowed without speaking.

"You've been ill, I suppose," said Curtis sarcastically.

"No, sir," responded Brooke simply; "I've been drunk for three days. There is no use in lying about it."

Curtis turned aside to hide a smile. He loved his staff, and was one of those extremely rare beings, a justly popular city editor. He was pleased with Brooke's answer, having been prepared for a whining tale of sickness.

"Mr. Brooke," he said more pleasantly, "do you know I intended to discharge you this morning?"

Brooke tried to look surprised.

"But," Curtis went on, "I've decided to give you another chance.

If you succeed with the assignment I'm going to give you, and keep straight after this, you may stay on here. If you fail on this assignment through any blunder of your own, or if you are drunk again, I shall discharge you on the spot. It is your last chance in this office. Do you understand?"

Brooke understood. He knew Curtis to be a man of his word.

"What is the assignment, sir?" he asked, his bloodshot eyes resting a moment on his chief's clear-cut features.

"While you were away, Saturday," answered Curtis, picking up a handful of clippings, "young Sydney Enfield, of Carew & Enfield, brokers, was arrested on a charge of embezzling two hundred thousand dollars from the firm of which he is junior partner. There's very little evidence against him, and he'll get off without any trouble. The police themselves look on the whole thing as a silly legal blunder. But here's what I want: I want you to go up to young Enfield's house—he lives somewhere in the early Forties—and get an interview with his wife. She's a mere girl. They were only married last year. I want you to get a good 'human interest' story there. You know the sort,—wifely indignation at her darling husband's unjust arrest, and all that sort of rot. If she won't see you, try to get a statement of some kind from Enfield's lawyers. They are Porter & Jackson, 992 Nassau Street."

"A nice sort of assignment to send a man on when it's his one hope of holding his job," Brooke growled as he boarded a Third Avenue Elevated train. "The woman will never consent to see me; and as for the lawyers, of course they're under honor not to discuss their client's case with outsiders. Any fool knows that."

The drink-mists gradually cleared from Jack Brooke's brain as he glanced over the clippings Curtis had given him. He was a born reporter, and his professional interest in the case was awakening. Hurriedly he mastered each detail and mapped out to himself the line of questions he would ask should Mrs. Enfield by any rare chance give him an interview.

The hope of keeping his position on the *Planet* too went far towards sobering Brooke. He felt, somehow, that if he were thrown out of work at this crisis there would be no more stoppages on his path to tramp-hood. His "grip" would be lost for good and all.

That he would be able to turn over a new leaf and remain sober, in case he kept his position, was a question on which he was far more doubtful.

Still, he felt, stranger things had happened. A boyish stride replaced his former slouching gate as he walked up Forty-seventh Street towards the Enfield house.

"Is Mrs. Enfield at home?" he asked of the trim maid at the door.

The servant looked distrustfully at him, and Brooke's heart sank.



"Please tell her a reporter would like to speak to her for a few minutes," he went on, his voice growing so husky as to be almost unintelligible.

The maid's face cleared. She went upstairs with the message, leaving Brooke, hat in hand, in the lower hall.

A moment later she reappeared.

"Mrs. Enfield will be down in a few moments, sir," she said with a marked change of manner. "Will you step into the drawing-room, please?"

Brooke laughed grimly as he paced the deserted drawing-room.

"If she'll see me, that's all I ask," he mused. "Trust me to get any story I choose out of a woman, if she'll only consent to speak to me. All any reporter who knows his business has to do is to keep his mouth shut, and in ten minutes a woman will tell all she knows. They begin by swearing they've nothing to say to the press. Then, if a man holds his tongue, they'll talk on till the cat's out of the bag and the story's told."

Brooke stopped short in his walk. Ascending the front steps was a very youthful man with a pad clutched in one hand and a pencil in the other.

"A new reporter from some paper or other," Brooke soliloquized. "Since these people seem so willing to see reporters, I may as well head him off and get an exclusive story on this. He's only a kid; probably his first month in the business. An older reporter doesn't flash a pad and pencil on the public, like a census man. Any old gag will work with him."

Brooke glanced to and fro. The entire lower floor was deserted. He stepped to the front door and opened it before the new-comer could ring.

The second reporter was thus confronted on the doorstep by a solemn-visaged being, who, from his hatless state, was apparently some member of the Enfield family.

"Good-morning, sir," said the youth. "I represent the New York *Dispatch*."

"I knew he was a cub reporter," mused Brooke. "Who ever says 'I represent,' except in detective novels?"

"I should like," went on the new-comer, "to interview Mrs. Enfield on this unfortunate embezzlement case."

"Ah, yes," Brooke broke in, his face assuming an undertaker-like air, "to be sure. But my poor sister cannot see you, sir. Remember what a blow this unmerited disgrace is to her. She is quite prostrated. Indeed, she has not even seen me. But any information I can give you——"

The cub reporter's face brightened.

Brief as was his newspaper experience, he had sense enough to know how unlikely he would be to get a word out of any member of the Enfield family. Yet here was the stricken wife's own brother, willing and even eager to talk. It seemed too good to be true. The *Dispatch* man scarce knew where to begin.

Brooke saved him the trouble. Every moment counted. He must get rid of the cub before Mrs. Enfield appeared.

"You see," he began in a sepulchral voice, "my poor dear brother-in-law is the victim of a conspiracy. We suspect that the magnates of Wall Street—perhaps a syndicate of financiers from all over the world—have become jealous of his rapid rise, and have plotted to ruin him. I am not at liberty to give my reasons for this theory. But take my word that it is the truth. I intend to make a family matter of this, and shall probably challenge either Russell Sage or J. Pierpont Morgan to meet me on the field of honor to redress my brother-in-law's wrongs."

The *Dispatch* man's eyes opened wide. Here was news indeed!

"And now," resumed Brooke, "I must ask you to excuse me. I fear I should break down were I to speak further of this calamity. I did not mean to say so much; but you gentlemen of the press are so clever: you manage to worm out the best-kept secrets."

Hastily retreating into the hallway, he cut short the *Dispatch* man's condolences by shutting the door in his face.

"I'd like to be in the office," he muttered half-aloud, "when that cub carries the story of my duel and the conspiracy to the city editor of the *Dispatch*. But then the *Dispatch* is just the paper to print a story like that in good faith. There'll be a hot time in Park Row when their next edition gets on the street."

The delight of this thought caused Brooke to execute a little pas seul on the fox-skin rug. His saltatory performance stopped abruptly at the sound of a light step on the upper stair.

The next moment a slender, graceful girl, wan and heavy-eyed, entered the room.

She advanced towards the reporter with eager, outstretched hand and a piteous little attempt at a smile.

"It was good of you to come so soon," she said gratefully.

Brooke looked askance.

"I should have sent for you yesterday, but I could not trust myself then to talk calmly," she continued. "To-day I will try to be more reasonable. But you will pardon me, I know, if I'm incoherent. I'll do my best. I will indeed."

Still more mystified, Brooke seated himself and looked dumbly at her. For the first time in his life he was at a loss for words.

This big-eyed little woman, with her dainty, grief-stained face, seemed such a mere child, and withal such a thoroughbred. Why should

she not only want to talk the matter over with him, but beg his forbearance?

"It's a long story. I'll make it as short as I can. It's best to be perfectly frank, isn't it?"

Brooke nodded.

"I will go back to the beginning. Don't stop me. I need all my courage. Sydney and I were married a year ago. Papa was wealthy, and I never knew, or even dreamed, the real value of money. So when I became Sydney's wife I supposed he was rich enough for us to live as I had lived at home. He never undeceived me; never refused or grudged one single request I made. When I suggested that I liked this house he bought it. I liked yachting, and asked him to buy a steam yacht last season. He bought it for me. These are only two out of a hundred such instances. I could not express a wish that he didn't gratify. And I—miserable, childish fool that I was!—never dreamed that money for all this couldn't be picked up like so much grass."

The girl choked, paused, and went on.

Brooke watched her dully, in no way understanding.

"Then," she said, "came the end—the horrible end."

The reporter pricked up his ears. The news-gathering instinct told him this was going to be a big story after all.

"For weeks," went on Mrs. Enfield, "Sydney would pace his study floor all night. He grew silent. He seemed to have some awful secret. I was wicked and thoughtless enough to believe he was growing tired of me, and—God forgive me—I reproached him with it. Oh, if I could only stop seeing his look when I said that!"

She shuddered and buried her face in her hands.

Brooke, coldly watching her, noticed how tiny and slender the fingers were, and speculated as to the karats of the solitaire that blazed above the plain gold band.

His foot tapped the floor lightly. Mrs. Enfield raised her head and continued:

"Yes, yes! I'll make it as short as I can. But can't you see—oh, *can't* you—what it costs me to speak of it at all? He came to me last Thursday night and told me everything."

Brooke was all attention now.

"He told me the whole pitiful story. My poor, misunderstood, unhappy boy! He had been admitted as junior partner in the firm just before our marriage. His profits were small, but enough to keep us comfortably if it hadn't been for my wicked extravagance. Then came my requests for more money, more style in living, and all the expenses that in my foolish blindness I looked on as a matter of course. He loved me, and he couldn't refuse me. How could he? Don't dare think it weak in him! It was noble, splendid! But each demand I

made took more and more of his money. Soon his savings were gone,—the savings he had worked so hard to lay aside. Then he borrowed money. At last—at last he raised money on the firm's securities."

Brooke's dull, bloodshot eyes were ablaze now. This was luck such as never comes twice in a lifetime. No one really believed Enfield guilty. Newspapers and police alike thought his arrest a stupid mistake. There was practically no evidence against him. He would have gotten off scot-free.

And here the true story of the monstrous defalcation was told exclusively to a *Planet* reporter—told by the guilty man's own wife.

But was it exclusive? If she talked thus freely to him, might not some earlier reporter have been equally fortunate. Might not the story even now be in Park Row. The dread turned Brooke faint.

"Have you told this story to any newspaper men, Mrs. Enfield?" he asked.

"Newspaper men?" gasped the girl. "Great Heaven, no! How could you imagine that I would spread the story of my darling's disgrace to the world?"

Brooke muttered a word or so of apology and breathed again.

"Sydney took—borrowed the securities in such a clever way that no jury in the land could convict him. His arrest is a silly blunder, caused by men who are on altogether the wrong track. The true story, which I've just told you, will never be known. Why, your partner says the case won't even come to trial."

"My partner?"

"Yes, Mr. Jackson, of your firm."

Brooke did some lightning brain work. Who was Jackson? And who, in the name of all the mysteries, was *he* supposed to be? He remembered now; Curtis had told him that Porter & Jackson were Enfield's lawyers.

But could that be the Jackson of whom she spoke? And if so, why did she refer to him as Brooke's partner? She had said five minutes before that no newspaper man should know the story. Why, then, had she told it to him?

The man began to see that Mrs. Enfield had mistaken him for some one else? But for whom?

"I know you can help us," the woman resumed. "When the maid said to me this morning, 'Mr. Porter would like to speak to you,' I felt that you had come to our aid and you would save Sydney."

So he was supposed to be Porter, of Porter & Jackson. He remembered now how husky and indistinct his voice had sounded, even to himself, as he had bade the maid tell Mrs. Enfield "a reporter would like to speak to her." The maid, doubtless on the lookout for the lawyer, had naturally misunderstood the word "reporter."

Such an idea seemed like a farce-comedy situation, yet it was the only way in which Brooke could solve the mystery.

Mrs. Enfield continued:

"My husband told me, when he left, that you and he went to Columbia together, Mr. Porter. He went to see you Saturday about this matter; but you were out of town, you know. So he had to consult Mr. Jackson. He told me he'd left word asking you to come here the minute you reached New York. He said you were his oldest, dearest friend, and that I must tell you the whole story. You would help us if any one could, Sydney said. So I gave orders that you, and you alone, should be admitted when you called."

"So much to the good!" Brooke laughed to himself. "This is too easy! And it's just horse-luck."

"You see, Mr. Porter," the girl went on, choking back sobs that would not be silenced, "I've told you everything. Sydney says you're his best friend. Everyone who knows Sydney must love him. You see, don't you, that it was all my own wickedness, and that he was not really wrong? Don't you understand that? He's so good, so gentle, so generous."

But Brooke did not answer. He was mentally mapping out the exclusive embezzlement story that should reinstate him in his old place as the *Planet's* crack reporter.

"I can see from your face," cried Mrs. Enfield impetuously, "how this sorrow of your friend's has wounded you. And now that I've told you all about it I feel almost happy again, for I know he's safe in your hands. And I want you to help me in something else. I'm going to sell this house and the yacht and all the rest of the extravagances, and he and I are going to work hard till we've paid every penny of this debt. Then we'll settle somewhere in the country, and I'll prove to Sydney that his wife isn't really the wicked little fool whose habit of throwing away money so nearly ruined him. You'll help me sell it, won't you? And oh, you *will* see his partners to-day and get him released? He wouldn't consent to be bailed, and said he'd only leave jail a free man. You'll bring him back to me? Promise, *please* promise! I love him so."

Half unconsciously she had caught both Brooke's hands in her own and knelt, looking pleadingly up into his bloated face.

Brooke tried to avoid the eager eyes, and to be oblivious of the trembling, childlike lips.

"I've shunned everyone since this happened," she murmured. "I couldn't face old friends or bear their pity. But with you it's so different. You seem to understand it all; and your friendship for Sydney makes it easy for me to speak to you about his trouble. You can never know all your visit has meant to me."

Brooke disengaged his hands and rose to his feet.

"Mrs. Enfield," he said harshly, without glancing at her, "you have made a mistake. It is your own blunder, and no trick of mine. I am not Mr. Porter, your husband's friend,—I am a New York *Planet* reporter. I came here to interview you about this embezzlement story. It is my duty to my paper and to myself to publish what you have told me."

Then, for the first time since he began to speak, he looked at her.

In an East Side street one day Brooke had seen a brutal 'longshoreman knock down a laughing, three-year-old child that in an ecstasy of babyish affection for the world at large had embraced the man's knees. He had seen the look of blank, horrified surprise on the baby face as the blow fell. Incidentally he had interviewed the 'longshoreman to such effect that the man did not leave the hospital for six weeks.

The same look was in Mrs. Enfield's eyes as she gazed dumbly at him. The same white horror left her childish face drawn and old.

Without a word she sank lightly to the polished floor, and lay there face downward, the fresh morning sunshine pouring in on her.

She had not fainted: the blow had merely robbed her of all speech and power. She lay at Brooke's feet, quivering all over like a beaten dog.

The reporter gazed down on the slender, girlish figure, dully noting how the sunbeams played in her gold-brown hair.

"This would make a good situation in a story," was the thought that years of the writing-habit forced on the reporter's brain. The thought was as unconscious as are a sleep-talker's words.

The woman lay motionless. The quiver had passed. At length a low, wordless moan broke from her lips.

A clock somewhere was striking ten.

Brooke lifted his eyes and looked wearily about the room. Then he walked out into the hall, picked up his hat and stick, mechanically adjusted his tie at the long mirror, and left the house.

The Monday morning gloom was gone from the *Planet's* city room. In its stead an orderly babel reigned.

The paper was going to press.

Curtis, the city editor, stood beside his desk, a frown on his handsome face. In his hand was a copy of the *Dispatch*.

On the first page, in glaring headlines, Curtis read:

**"WILL CHALLENGE RUSSELL SAGE!"**

**"SYDNEY ENFIELD'S BROTHER-IN-LAW SAYS HE WILL FIGHT  
SAGE OR J. P. MORGAN."**

**"ENFIELD FAMILY DECLARE THE ALLEGED EMBEZZLER'S ARREST  
TO BE A CONSPIRACY."**

**"MRS. ENFIELD PROSTRATED!"**

Then followed a column of weird idiocy that is remembered on Park Row unto this day. The story was an enlargement of the cub reporter's interview with Brooke. The latter was therein described as "pale and tear-stained, his eyes red from long weeping."

"Of course, this brother-in-law is a crank," remarked Curtis; "but Brooke ought to have made a great story out of this. Didn't he send down anything at all?"

"No, sir," answered the assistant city editor reluctantly, "not a word. I don't understand it. He should have telephoned the story to us by ten-thirty. It's twelve o'clock now."

"We've gone to press, and the *Dispatch* has beaten us on the only good story of the day," said the city editor. "I was a fool to trust Brooke. Yet the man seemed sincere in his wish to do better. Perhaps he'll have something about it for the next edition. If not——"

Curtis did not need to finish the sentence. His assistant remembered the chief's warning promise to Brooke, and knew it would be kept.

An office boy bearing a sheaf of papers—first editions of the *Planet*, still damp from the press—burst into the room and began laying copies on the various editors' desks.

Before the door could close behind him some one else entered.

It was Brooke.

Curtis met him in the middle of the floor.

"Well, Mr. Brooke," he cried, "where have you been all this time? Did you get the story?"

Brooke breathed a heavy sigh, redolent of freshly-swallowed whiskey.

"I didn't get any story at all," he muttered thickly. "I—I forgot to go there."

His voice trailed off into a sheepish laugh, and, turning on his heel, he slouched out of the office.



## THE ECHO

BY ALOYSIUS COLL

**A** THUNDERING tone, hard driven down a glen,  
Broke on the granite at a mountain's feet,  
And tremulous, and soft and lowly, then  
Returned, a finished echo, pure and sweet.

In ancient days a voice of mighty power  
Sang out the glory of our land to be;—  
Back from the walls of circumstance, this hour  
That word returns,—a rounded prophecy!

# FRUIT OUT OF SEASON

BY  
MARY MOSS



PHILADELPHIA  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY  
1902



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# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OCTOBER, 1902



## FRUIT OUT OF SEASON

BY MARY MOSS

L

VIRGINIA DRYDEN took her way down-town of an uninviting February morning to the weekly Board Meeting of a Hospital for Women.

The usual business was disposed of. Having read her well-kept treasurer's report, she listened with trained attention while other branches of the work came under discussion.

The ladies thrashed over that much vexed question, the suitable size for a workman's family. One leader in debate, a whole-souled, indignant matron, with instinctive Malthusian sympathies, as unconscious as M. Jourdain's prose, roundly stated that the women of the poor should be personally chidden for reckless propagation. Following this, a shrinking maiden lady in a number of twittering attempts endeavored to utter her view of the question in words not unbecoming a spinster, breathing out after a series of false starts, "But you know, Mrs. Anderson,"—her statement grew somewhat elliptical,—“the men will only——”

“Let them,” fiercely interrupted the matron, whose own husband was barely allowed the use of a latchkey.

Greatly bored, Virginia listened with relief to a weary-looking little woman whose dilated pupils and upturned glances showed some well-spring of emotion that made her revolt from these sordid views.

“It's all the poor souls have, Mrs. Anderson,” she protested. “Children are the one joy that belongs alike to rich and poor. Perhaps we can't share the fulness of our lives with them, but the idea of curtailing their one privilege seems to me almost wicked.”

Virginia agreed with each speaker,—or, rather, she fully appre-

ciated each point of view,—but, considering such discussion fruitless, refrained from saying anything to prolong it,—indeed, it had already devoured so much time that she was too late to lunch at home and be punctual at her next meeting, so, stifling for a change of atmosphere, she decided to try a rather showy French restaurant that had caught her eye on the way down-town.

Once in the dining-room, Virginia regretted having come. The place was not disreputable, merely unsuitable, and she had passed the phase in which a young woman tries to assert her emancipation by risky bravado, perfectly understanding that a little outward conformity is the surest path to liberty.

Most of the tables held four people and were already occupied. A few had seats for two, and at one of these Virginia took her place, reading a newspaper by way of protection while waiting for the table d'hôte lunch.

The room was gayly noisy. Parties of chattering Frenchmen made merry as they watched the sugar dissolving in absinthe, the odor of which mingled unpleasantly with fumes of onion and cigarette. Other tables were occupied by eager families who fell upon every course with deepest interest. Electric lights flashed back dazzling rays from tawdry gilding and mirrors. At her desk by the door sat "Madame," with a beautiful professional smile for entering guests and a hawk-like scrutiny for trembling waiters.

Just above the sky-line formed by the top of her newspaper Virginia became aware of a curving expanse of waistcoat traversed by a watchchain. Both waistcoat and chain were of a splendor that fairly threw mirrors and gilding into the shade. Immediately she was addressed by a husky voice steeped in a nauseating tone of sentimentality.

"This is a lonely way for a young lady to eat her lunch."

"I prefer being alone." Virginia did not raise her eyes from the paper, and answered with the most self-possessed frigidity. She was not frightened, only deeply annoyed at herself for straying into such a position; but annoyance intensified almost to alarm when the stranger laid a fat, unmuscled hand well adorned with fashionable rings on the back of the vacant chair with an evident intention of joining her whether or no. She then looked straight into his vulgar, relaxed face, and spoke with a quiet clearness calculated to penetrate a hide of any thickness: "It will be extremely unpleasant to me and not agreeable for you when I ask the proprietor to put you out, yet that is what will happen in less than one minute if you don't stop annoying me. There are plenty of empty places."

Before she had finished speaking a pleasant voice interrupted, "Why, here you are! I'm so sorry to be late!"

The speaker was a handsome lad of about one-and-twenty, straight-limbed, straight-featured, with the voice and carriage of a well-bred, athletic collegian. Giving her a meaning look, he adroitly slipped into the vacant chair while the intruder was still deciding what answer to make. Seeing the adventure held forth little hope of amusement, the stranger slowly turned his prow away and was lost in a remote corner.

The young man leaned his elbows on the table in an intimately confidential fashion, quite at variance with the respectful tone in which he proceeded to address her: "Don't you think I'd better take my lunch here? That boulder might come back. If it hadn't been for the fuss, I'd have given him a slatting he'd remember." The young voice grew fairly wistful that such legitimate sport should have been missed. "Of course," he went on, "you needn't talk to me."

Virginia looked at him with friendly amusement. "That would be rather ungrateful, wouldn't it, after your getting me out of a scrape so nicely?"

While the waiter was bringing soup the pair looked each other over with considerable frankness. The boy spoke first: "My name is McCall, Jack McCall,—John, I mean."

"Mine is Dryden, Virginia Dryden," she rejoined, smiling.

"Not——" Pulling himself together, Jack regarded her quizzically for a moment, then took a fresh start, saying hastily, "I think I've heard my sister speak of you."

"Mr. McCall, I should like to know what you have in your mind too bad to say."

Virginia had a gently teasing manner, highly inviting to confidence.

"What funny fish!" Jack exclaimed, looking curiously at the little brown dab on his plate.

"You know," he went on in a delicious tone of masculine worldliness, "you've no business here alone."

"I'm sorry your original speech was too bad to finish. It is a very short acquaintance for you to form so poor an opinion of me."

If at twelve anyone had told Virginia that by one she was voluntarily to assume an air of bantering coquetry with a slip of a lad, she would not have considered the idea worth repudiating. The young man, however, seemed to find nothing out of the way in her attitude, and looked full at her with impish, dancing eyes.

"My sister Henrietta," he began, "is first class, of course, but not exactly young. She's deep in all kinds of bores. She runs the—well, I forget the name, some club for cleaning streets and generally bossing things. Two days ago at dinner she gave me a red-hot account of the way a lady presided in the absence of the regular chair—chair-lady, is it? No? Well, whatever you call it. I didn't pay much

attention to what she did, but the name was Miss Virginia Dryden, and she seemed to be a regular hustler."

"And you are afraid I may begin to hustle you?"

"Yes, try to take away my vote." His dignified elderliness in making this admission filled Virginia with secret joy.

"No, but really," he went on, "you won't think me very fresh?"

She nodded encouragement.

"I imagined such a person would be like Henrietta,—all right, you know, but pretty old, with fierce clothes; and then I find a regular winner, young and turned out like everything, lunching in a razzle-dazzle place. Really, you know, you ought to know better than to come here by yourself."

Virginia's habitual air of somewhat mechanical cheerfulness gave way before a flood of spontaneous mirth, and she leaned back in her chair, fairly rippling over with gayety.

Flushing, the young man dropped his tone of slangy good-fellowship, saying with the utmost stiffness and ill-will, "I beg your pardon for being so stupid."

Suddenly accommodating herself to his point of view, Virginia became quite serious, but for an inextinguishable gleam sparkling in her sombre-colored eyes.

"Stupid! Hardly that, Mr. McCall! If you were my son, I'd think you alarmingly precocious."

Seeing him still unappeased, she added, "It's a tremendously subtle compliment to accuse a person like me of undue friskiness, and you've no business to know so much at your age."

Although she felt it a shame to play on him so crudely, the prompt response of his transparent young nature filled her with humorous delight, and with real regret she noticed how late it had grown.

Completely propitiated, Jack walked along the street beside her till, suddenly stopping, she held out her hand. "Good-by, I take a car at this corner. Good-by, and thank you."

He not only took her hand, but continued holding it while he asked, "Are you going to know me the next time we meet, or is this just a pick-up, irregular acquaintance?"

"Surely," remonstrated Virginia.

"Then may I come to see you?"

This request evoked visions of an evening call, of Jack painfully conversing with a group of her usual visitors—a professor or two, a political reformer, and a philanthropist. Too wise for such experiments, Virginia cast about for an excuse that should not hurt the boy's feelings.

After a noticeable pause, she spoke quite frankly, "You'd better not come, you would have such a horrid time." He shook his head.

"Yes, you would. All my friends are sensible old people. They talk about tiresome things; they even bore me." This escaped her quite involuntarily. "You would come once, stick it out till the stroke of ten, and hate the memory of me for ever. You are too young for that sort of thing; it's a heavy enough strain on the middle-aged. You ought to be playing about with pretty girls."

"Girls! If you only knew how I hate girls!" His manner suggested some recent cause for despising the whole accursed race of them. "Look here,"—his voice displayed a fine gift of wheedling,— "I think I see what you mean about the evening, but won't you take a walk with me instead? You don't seem crazy about the other fellows. To-morrow is Sunday, and I sha'n't be at college. Suppose we go for a stroll in the Park?"

Virginia was conscious of a foolish desire to cut an ethical lecture and spend an hour or two with this pleasant creature, whose pleading eyes expressed the utmost longing for her society. The car was rapidly approaching, and she stepped on the platform without having answered.

"Very well, I'll be there at eleven," said Jack, standing hat in hand in a puddle by the car-track, a fine rain drizzling down on his close-cropped, thick, brown hair.

## II.

At the end of a long afternoon Virginia found a pleasant surprise waiting at home in the shape of a visit from her young niece, Dorothy, a flaxen-haired school-girl whose native earnestness and simplicity had in some unexplained way escaped the influence of an amazingly silly mother, Virginia's sister, Helen Bland.

"Dearest," the girl began, snuggling and burrowing a pink cheek into Virginia's shoulder, "are you sure you don't mind my staying over Sunday? Nannie is going to have an impromptu dance to-night. Of course, I can't be at it, and it's so horrid to be poked off and hear the music and everything going on downstairs, but if I'm in the way here——"

"In the way! My blessed child! As if I wasn't always thankful to get hold of you!" Virginia spoke with conviction. She felt a strong attraction to all young creatures, except, perhaps, her older niece, that Nannie whose gay doings routed poor Dorothy out of house and home. Moreover, this particular child was appealing not only by force of sweet affectionateness and crystal sincerity, but also because instinctively she bade fair to tread the very paths in life along which Virginia herself had started out so blithely, only to be assailed later by nameless misgivings.

Somewhat serious, not to say priggish, at sixteen, Virginia by the

time she was thirty had eaten fruit out of season till the legitimate diversions of middle-life were pretty well exhausted, and with a fresh, undamaged body in revolt against the occupations of advancing age, she found herself in danger of being overtaken by a tardy and most inconvenient youthfulness.

Relentlessly clear vision made her well aware that in this predicament women either fall ill or turn foolish, and considering her own future hopelessly mortgaged, she tried to cheat Destiny by seeing to it that Dorothy missed no stage of timely greensickness. Sympathizing tenderly with all the child's little troubles, she never forgot that such sorrows are just as poignant as if they were to be permanent; moreover, Helen Bland's idea of parental discipline, of a ruthlessness only known to the truly frivolous, gave frequent occasion for Dorothy to seek consolation.

"Fancy my not wanting you always, Kitten! and to-morrow—to-morrow of all days," Virginia said with sudden inspiration, "when there's something specially nice we can do together!"

"What is it?" coaxed Dorothy. "You are not going to make me guess."

"No, you needn't guess,"—Virginia felt disinclined to explain,— "time will show. It's nothing wildly exciting, just pleasant."

"If it rains?" Dorothy questioned.

"Oh you little pessimist! It can't rain again to-morrow," said Virginia gayly.

Saturday's drizzle, however, was merely a preliminary tuning up; the real performance took place on Sunday, when warm, disintegrating torrents pelted down upon half-frozen city snow-heaps, putting an end to every possibility of a country walk with Jack; so, merely telling Dorothy that the mysterious outing was postponed, Virginia conscientiously accepted the day as predestined for answering letters, settling accounts, and generally tackling those odious odd jobs that crop up to make bad weather unpopular.

Mrs. Dryden had gone to Mass, and Dorothy was luxuriously ensconced before the drawing-room fire, fortified with a novel of "The Duchess" and a pernicious box of candy.

The child's fresh cheeks and heavy flaxen plaits stood out from the shadow of a deep arm-chair; her face, with its unmarked features and smooth white brow, was a fair blank page except for serious blue eyes promising unusual depths of loyalty and truth in the woman yet to be. Just now Dorothy was a little bored, having conducted "Lillian" through an enchanting maze of hair-washings and misunderstandings to a happy last chapter. She lifted her own long plaits, finding them discouragingly unlike the heroine's beguiling halo of tumbled fluff. Nannie, her sister, was more of Lillian's kind, except

—well, Nannie really had no feeling. The judgments of sixteen do not err in the direction of over-lenieney; moreover, Dorothy's heart still ached with the memory of Nannie's experiments upon a person whom she rated little below the archangels.

This adoration was completely impersonal and detached. In her experience incomparable gentlemen of one-and-twenty rarely noticed the existence of tall, pigtailed school-girls.

The door-bell rang, a voice asked for Miss Dryden. Dorothy uncrossed her flexible legs and sat up stiffly; those sharp young ears were unerring as a dog's in catching the sound of a well-known voice.

"Miss Dorothy Bland's in the parlor, sir," said the maid, who, insensitive to the gulf dividing sixteen from twenty-one, naturally allotted the visitor with one of his own kind.

"I asked for Miss Dryden," answered the voice. Cruel! Dorothy felt the smart of rising tears, and jumped up with an idea of escaping, but the room utterly lacked convenient exits, so she stood, deeply apologetic and quite unequal to starting a conversation with Jack McCall, who came in looking much taken aback and not a little cross at the sight of her.

To him Dorothy meant only a hateful memory.

It had been a lifelong regret yesterday at breakfast, when his expression was so depressed that his sister, diagnosing the trouble as malaria, had tormented him with quinine pills. He had swallowed the pills with a bitter sense of being misunderstood, walked the streets till lunch-time, a victim to broken-hearted despair, then, finding himself extremely hungry and wishing to avoid family comment, he had turned into Bertrand's and met Virginia.

Yesterday the sight of Dorothy would have overwhelmed him; to-day it was merely vexatious; nevertheless, he greeted her politely.

"Aunt Virginia is upstairs writing," faltered the poor child, giving him a very cold hand to shake. She bore no resentment for his bad humor, which appeared to her only the heroic sign of betrayed affections.

The maid came to the door. "Miss Virginia says will you please entertain the gentleman till she comes."

Left to her own resources, Dorothy didn't quite know whether to sit down first or ask him to take a chair. Jack was far too immersed in his own dark past to come at once to her rescue. Finally they managed to be seated stiffly opposite each other.

Dorothy felt the burden of speech to be upon her, but what to say! If she started golf, it would cruelly recall happy days on the Gloucester links with the faithless Nannie. Football, perhaps! Nannie again! Suddenly natural curiosity opened a way.

"I didn't know you were a friend of Aunt Virginia's."



"I only met her yesterday." Jack relented a trifle. "I didn't know she was your aunt."

"Indeed, she is." Dorothy was growing quite fluent. "She is such a dear. I like her better than anyone—except, of course, mamma and papa," she added with a rather perfunctory sense of filial duty.

A pause again threatened, but was saved by the entrance of Virginia herself. She wore a soft, dark-brown dress made with the most uncompromising simplicity, but, whether by design or happy accident, the shade carried out the suggestion of her nut-brown hair and darkening hazel eyes, and the spotless fineness of her linen gave rather the effect of a distinguished uniform than of an over-plain costume. Her face was white, but the deep-red line of lips belied all sense of bloodlessness.

Looking upon Jack's visit as a gift from Heaven to Dorothy, she came prepared to regularize their meeting and leave them. Two seconds of their society revealed to her alert perceptions that they were old but not friendly acquaintances, and the three settled down to a trying half hour, conversing upon topics of general interest, including a laborious bout on the weather. Too shy to get up and leave the room, Dorothy sat primly at her aunt's side, presenting to Jack's eyes a most unattractive exhibition of immaturity. His desire to be alone with Virginia was augmenting. He liked her even more so, bareheaded; those smooth masses of nut-brown hair, with the narrow white parting, soothed his nervous dislike to fluffy, treacherous, little yellow heads. But how could two congenial people talk with a baby-faced stick of a child staring at them?

He left as soon as he could sufficiently rally himself to cover the distance from his chair to the door, but not till he had wrung from Virginia a promise to walk with him on the following Sunday.

When the day came Virginia was half annoyed at herself for yielding to his importunities. She found his society pleasant enough, but she felt it unsuitable. A question seemed to lurk behind the impassive face of the maid who announced him. Virginia felt constrained to give her mother a lame and most uncharacteristic excuse for going off with the lad, and finally joined him in the parlor in what, with a less controlled person, might have been frank ill-humor.

Jack awaited her in the most radiant spirits, hampered, however, by shyness. For a whole week he had dreamed of this walk; the seven days had seemed an eternity of waiting. His existence and hers moved along lines so completely parallel that only an arbitrary overstepping of natural boundaries could ever throw them together. During this time he had begun to show the most surprising interest in Henrietta's affairs, and she had fully responded to his inquiries with anecdote, exposition of theories, historic sketches, and philosophic

deduction,—with everything, in fact, but one word of Miss Virginia Dryden. Jack's feelings were worked up to the point where he didn't dare to put a direct question; he could not feel sure of finding a natural voice at command if he spoke her name, and as for blushing, his turning beet red was a certainty.

Virginia's attractions had been revealed to him when he was hurt, sore, and deeply mortified; the beginning of their acquaintance was balm to his smarting self-respect. Up to this time he had mentally divided women into Nannies or Henriettas, and this new variety came upon him as a delightful discovery; moreover, she happened to possess that intangible something that makes one woman spark to a man's tinder, while another equally charming in herself has no power to rouse him.

Categorically, Jack had fallen in love with Virginia, and the improbability of such an event in no way lessened its actuality.

The idea of such a mishap was so remote from Virginia's horizon that she only hoped this pleasant creature hadn't a vein of hidden priggishness which made him hanker after associating with older people.

This suspicion was strengthened by a certain constraint and lack of naturalness in his greeting. She was far from suspecting that seeing her had such an effect on Jack's pulses as effectually to suspend his customary flow of talk. Virginia foresaw a dismal morning, but with a desire to make some use of the time, at least in the way of fresh air and exercise, she proposed taking an out-of-town trolley and walking for a few miles.

Once in the country, Jack recovered his command of language and soon showed himself the pleasantest of companions.

The day was warm and beguiling; if winter had really been a thing of the past, there could hardly have been sweeter touches of spring in the air.

"Just listen to those birds," said Jack. "I declare, even the sparrows seem rather a decent sort to-day. There's a robin; he really can sing! Here comes another; they'll be fighting in a minute."

They were leaning their elbows on a rough country fence, looking down athwart a steep incline; below were woods, above lines of hills overlapped in softest curves, the very swelling bosom of mother earth clad in the deep-hued verdure of winter wheat. To the trees had come that subtle change which hints of approaching spring. As yet no bud, leaf, or flower had blurred the outline of naked boughs and twigs, but there was color in bark of trunk and branches, telling of rising sap, of the circulating life soon to break free in blossom and foliage.

The bright plumage of early bluebirds showed against the mass of one dark cedar.

As Virginia looked out on this world breathing of coming life, of changed conditions, of flower and fruition, sweet, painful tears rose to her eyes. Spring had beaten at her heart's door and found it empty.

Jack watched her long and earnestly. He read the melancholy of her face and felt the most pressing need to offer comfort. The only methods known to him seemed too crudely demonstrative to be safely put in practice.

A furry black-and-tan caterpillar crawled slowly along the fence. It brushed against Jack's bare fingers, rousing him to speech.

"Look at this chap, Miss Dryden. What do you suppose is going to become of him?"

"Nipped in the next frost," she answered. "He won't be the only person led astray by this enticing sunshine."

Feeling that she had been somewhat neglectful of her companion, Virginia now made a happy conversational effort.

"How I wish we had Dorothy along!"

Jack recoiled about three feet, and leaned against another rail. The tone in which he answered was bitter with injured feeling.

"How nice! Your mother could have come along too, and my sister! Henrietta would have given us a lecture on philanthropy while you debated her points, with Mrs. Dryden for referee. Miss Bland and I would have tip-cat and marbles to keep us quiet."

He looked straight down at the woods, his hat tilted over his face, his whole air expressive of angry mortification.

Virginia, deeply contrite, drew close to him, vainly trying to look up into his averted eyes.

"You are the very crossdest boy I've ever known," she coaxed. "Won't you forgive my wanting poor little Dorothy to share a pleasure? I never wish her to have anything that isn't the very nicest."

Jack's wounded dignity was pierced by the sensation that there was untold joy in having Virginia in an attitude of almost tender supplication, but he was not to be easily propitiated; before he relented she should award him some striking privilege. The rascal spoke in a voice of proud humility.

"It is unjustifiable, of course, to feel so; it is too much to expect that you should be willing to waste a whole morning on me; but if you only knew how I had looked forward to seeing you alone!"

He continued to stare moodily away from her till Virginia felt as if she had inadvertently stepped on a friendly, playful puppy. She drew a little nearer, laying a gloved hand gently on his arm.

The faithless Nannie had certainly given Jack a touch of mature experience in such matters. He went on, sad but unresentful, "We had better go home; I only bore you."

Dismayed at the extent of his hurt, Virginia nervously pulled off her gloves to give herself an occupation while she meditated on some way of soothing him. Impulsively she laid her soft white hand on his muscular brown one. "Dear boy, don't be so foolish."

Jack was not adamant. With his other hand he covered hers, then bent his head till his lips and cheek rested on it. Virginia watched him, half smiling, half doubtful, till his kisses grew aggressive.

"Really, really,"—her voice was gay and teasing,—“you do that charmingly, my child, but it can't go on all day.” “As if it could matter,” she assured herself, “with me old enough to be his grandmother.”

### III.

THAT evening Virginia's customary Sunday visitors arrived in force. Most of these were men, intelligent specialists of some kind, who, sure of trained sympathy, brought her the latest account of their work. She possessed incredible power of mental adjustment, and could listen with her right ear to an experimental philanthropist while the regeneration of the world through Art was being forcefully declaimed on her other side.

All at once to-night she felt an immense fatigue, and found herself more impressed by the physical attributes of her guests than by their intellectual endowments. While Professor Richards, the eminent biologist, was holding forth on his newest convictions, based upon observation of the Dentition of Senile Bats, her mind refused to come to order and listen, but frivolously compelled her to notice the Professor's long, horse-like visage, with its undeveloped cheek-bones and prominent lower jaw. His used, unfresh complexion suggested in contrast another face, brown, fine in texture, not perhaps saliently handsome, but just a human face well in drawing and not irritating to the eye, like this ill-contrived, battered mask.

The Professor, happily unconscious, was carrying his argument to a successful conclusion, incontrovertibly proving—what? She had completely lost the thread. He was saying, “There is a fossul bat in North Ca'lina——”

Heavens! For how many years was she to endure such twaddle! What was learning to—to—— She could hardly formulate it, but natural instincts in open revolt told her that she would rather listen to Jack's boyish comments of sparrows and caterpillars, than be edified by knowing the true significance of bats from the Creation to the Day of Judgment.

Jack's voice itself was a pleasant instrument, and while he probably was as ignorant as any young savage of all matters not ground into him at college, at least he spoke the tongue of civilization. If he ever should have occasion to use such a word, he wouldn't thicken it into

foss-u-l and Ca'lina! A long-suppressed fastidiousness asserted itself with inconvenient violence. It was a blessed relief when the striking of midnight suggested to her visitors the expediency of taking their departure.

For the next few days Virginia looked for a visit from Jack. At parting he had asked permission to come, and this time she had not refused. At first she put his non-appearance down to bashfulness, then felt mildly surprised and disappointed. By the end of a fortnight she was heartily ashamed of the whole episode, and took his neglect as sound discipline for her folly in imagining that she could have possessed any real interest for him. Then she put the whole matter out of her mind, save for an occasional prick of mortification which refused to be entirely banished from her consciousness.

One Saturday about three weeks after the walk she decided to refresh herself from the cares of life by taking Dorothy to a matinée. The child arrived at the house looking somewhat pale; even the prospect of Mr. Sothern and front seats could not dispel a certain cloud of depression. Virginia wondered what had gone wrong, but was much too considerate to ask.

The play contained all that could be craved by the youthful imagination: love, heroism, chivalrous inability to explain away a false situation, and finally a duel against great odds, in which the hero received a wound which threatened to be mortal. The leading lady and a faithful attendant propped him up against a rock, where he reclined, looking touchingly pale and near his end.

Happening to glance at Dorothy, Virginia looked quickly away, but not before she had seen the young girl bury her face in her handkerchief in a vain effort to stifle the most heartbroken sobs.

In a minute the curtain dropped, and an un pitying blaze of light illumined Dorothy's hopelessly defaced visage. Without looking at her, Virginia spoke quietly of the curtain. The child furtively wiped her eyes, answering unsteadily. Her aunt rambled on without much heed to what she was saying in a long disquisition on the relative merits of iron and asbestos. She couldn't make up her mind whether it would be better to imperil Dorothy's partly regained composure by offering to go home, or to ignore the trouble and let her struggle back to self-control.

The last act was gay and inspiring. The sight of the Marquis and the lady safe in each other's arms receiving the congratulations of an admiring court restored the little maid to a comparatively happy frame of mind, and no word of explanation was spoken till Virginia went to kiss her good-night.

"Do you feel all right, Kitten?"

"Yes, Aunt Virginia." Dorothy was sitting up in bed, and when

Virginia put her arm around the child, drawing the fair head comfortably down on her shoulder, the cause of trouble suddenly came to the surface. "Aunt Virginia, have you heard about Mr. McCall to-day?"

"Heard about him, dear? No. What has he been doing?" Virginia was amazed to feel a certain embarrassment in asking.

"Oh! Don't you know?" Dorothy faltered.

"Know what, dear?"

Once started, Dorothy's remarks poured out in a little, breathless torrent.

"He's been awfully ill. Harry Rush came out to see Nannie last Wednesday evening; I was learning my lessons in the back room and couldn't help hearing what they were talking about. Harry said Ja—Mr. McCall had typhoid fever and they were afraid he mightn't get through. He was very bad from the first—delirious and all that. Do you suppose he suffers much? I thought you might have heard to-day."

After a sensation of utter shock Virginia had a secondary emotion at finding how this piece of news affected her. By rights she should have minded it no more than the illness or danger of any pleasant acquaintance. In fact, she felt unstrung by active personal apprehension.

Rising hastily to gain relief in moving, she found her knees weak and unreliable, her hands trembling as if she had been shaken by a physical blow. Her voice was slow in coming, but Dorothy's anxious eyes demanded an answer.

"No, dear, I hadn't even heard of his being ill. I'm very, very sorry."

She paused a moment, thinking. "We can't do anything to-night, but to-morrow we will go to his house and ask. You mustn't worry now, darling, those things are often exaggerated, and think how strong he is. I'm so glad you told me. Good-night."

Virginia was far from feeling the assurance she feigned for Dorothy's benefit. Jack seemed to her the very person to die young, in the curious fashion that life delights in wasting the vigorous and happy. By the next morning he was filled with visions of a darkened house, of crape, of all the hateful, ugly adjuncts of death and burial.

Dorothy was all for starting at once on their visit of inquiry, but Virginia suggested the wisdom of waiting till an hour when they could be sure of hearing the doctor's latest opinion. At eleven o'clock a card was brought up. On reading "Miss Henrietta McCall" Virginia flew downstairs at a pace that would have done credit to Dorothy.

Miss McCall was a lean, erect specialized worker, whose persistent

efforts in the line of sociological philanthropy seemed rather the result of a relentless sense of order than of any weak partiality for the erring human race.

Virginia liked to be on committees with her because of her conscientious thoroughness and efficiency, but their relation had never become personal.

Henrietta was standing in the middle of the parlor, and began to speak at once with the manner of a person who is far from approving the message it is a duty to deliver.

"It is with much hesitation that I have disturbed you, Miss Dryden, but it is at the instance of our family physician that I have taken this liberty."

Virginia was almost too impatient to be polite in urging her to continue.

"My brother Jack has been very ill of typhoid fever. All through his delirium with the most curious persistence he kept repeating your name. How he can ever have got hold of it I can't imagine, but he seemed to labor under the most absurd hallucination of knowing you quite well. He talked of walks and visits which can only be the creation of his fevered imagination."

"How is he now?" Virginia gasped. She knew there was much food for reflection and self-discipline in this speech, but anxiety about the boy postponed all thought of herself.

"Thank you, much better. Very weak still, but out of danger unless there should be a relapse."

"Has the fever entirely left him?" Virginia felt a thirst for detail.

"Yes, or nearly so, but one curious symptom remains. He is quite clear in his mind on all subjects but one. He continually asks that you be brought to see him and declares that you are great friends. The doctors think it better to humor him. To my mind it is a great mistake; those post-delirium delusions should be combated for the patient's own good. After a similar illness Professor Bixby, a friend of mine, was fully persuaded that his legs had been amputated. He very nearly died of nervous depression before he could be convinced that both of them were safe under the covers."

"Your brother is not so far astray," said Virginia, smiling. "I've met him and we did take a walk. You see, he is a friend of my young nieces." Virginia's brain supplied this disingenuous explanation before her conscience could suppress its utterance.

"Oh! then perhaps you wouldn't mind coming to see him just for a minute. I know that it is a great imposition to take up any of your valuable time, but really," said Henrietta, as if apologizing for too great sisterly weakness, "he does seem very sick, and the doctors all think it may do him good."

"When shall I come?" Virginia felt it useless to protest her perfect willingness.

"Now, that is really kind! If Sunday weren't such a busy day, I should suggest——"

"My dear Miss McCall,"—Virginia spoke with the most intentional priggishness,—*"I have always considered attention to the sick one of the most suitable occupations for women, and there seems no reason for confining it exclusively to the poor, who so frequently dislike it."*

"At four o'clock then?" During her speech Henrietta had eyed Virginia with a gleam of doubt, but her serenely tranquil face gave no hint of sarcasm. "You are certainly very kind, Miss Dryden," she added stiffly.

When the door had closed behind her visitor Virginia had an unprecedented experience. She was seized and overcome by a convulsion of sobs and tears that prostrated her on the sofa before there was possibility of gaining the shelter of her own room.

It was some minutes before she could in any way control herself, then, still shaken like a child, she sat up and began to dry her eyes.

"Aunt Virginia,"—in front of her stood Dorothy, a quiet, stricken Dorothy, with a new air of composure,—*"when did he die?"*

"He is better, dear; he sent for me to go to see him."

"Oh! Then we needn't inquire."

Dorothy thought a moment, then added soberly, "I think I'll go up and lie down, my head aches to-day," and she slipped quickly out of the room.

#### IV.

VIRGINIA'S first interview with Jack and the two succeeding ones consisted in her standing for five minutes at his bedside, trying to be unnaturally natural and showing no dismay at his changed appearance.

This long, pale, sunken-eyed creature, whose white, transparent hands lay listless on the coverlet, had nothing in common with the buoyant athlete of her recollections. His thin, spiritualized face was further elongated by a soft, reddish beard. Virginia was puzzled by a sense of having seen this person before, and the lost likeness tormented her till she remembered seeing in an out-of-the-way Italian town a Descent from the Cross by some nameless disciple of Luini, which had made a painful and lasting impression on her by its touching air of crushed and broken youth.

She would have liked to show a little demonstrative tenderness to this pathetic traveller, whose great, wistful eyes seemed still to mirror images of the strange country whose boundaries he had so nearly crossed.



She wondered if the nurse would ever leave them alone, as the starchy presence of this very professional young lady reduced the possibilities of life to the headings on a series of miraculously perfect charts, making everything else in the world seem contemptibly behind the times or dangerously septic.

On her fourth visit Virginia was greeted by a pleasant surprise. Dressed and clean shaven, Jack lay stretched on a lounge, well propped up with pillows. His face looked more natural, and in his eyes there lurked a gleam of human fractionness.

In a weak but decided voice he directed the nurse: "Thank you, Miss Arnold, that is all. If you will kindly put a chair here for Miss Dryden, you can go off and write your letters." Then, pleadingly to Virginia, "The doctor said you might stay an hour to-day, but, of course, you can't spare all that time."

"An hour!" said Virginia cheerfully. "That's not too long for me, I've nothing in the world to do."

The nurse left with the manner of a person whose judgment is being disregarded, and Jack drew a long breath of relief. "Letters are that girl's only human weakness. I hope she gets a good mail to-day." Then, with an air of confidential intimacy, "Take off your gloves and veil, Miss Dryden, please, and look friendly. Good Lord! You'll never know the trouble I've had getting round that slave-driver and Henrietta. The doctor is white, he really understands, but they tell him I'm flighty just because I want a little human society and find theirs bad for my health. To-day I struck,—struck on milk, struck on beef-juice, boycotted all doses and stimulants, as they call them. When Dr. Dawson came I put the thing before him square, got what I wanted, and called the strike off. They wanted me to keep that filthy beard."

"You behaved like a naughty sick baby." The severity of this was quite neutralized by the caressing gentleness of Virginia's voice. "Wouldn't you like me to read aloud? I don't suppose you ought to talk much."

"Read! That is one of my troubles. Miss Arnold would read aloud, with expression too!—ugh! the most awful books. Now I make her plough through the sporting-page of the paper every day, and she's not so keen about it."

Virginia remembered her duties to constituted society and shook a disapproving head. "Not very nice of you, Jack. They've pulled you through a pretty stiff turn."

"Oh, don't you scold, Miss Dryden, please. I'd be all right with another kind of nurse. A fellow I know had one last year and she was awfully decent. This female has been at the head of some big circus and is accustomed to bossing a hundred or so people; now she

has all that to work off on me. I don't even dare touch these pillows after she's been at them. They are all right by the book, I suppose, but they don't fit my back."

"If I were to move them," said Virginia weakly, "you could put the blame on me if she minded. Can you sit up a minute?"

"No, you mustn't bother," said Jack; "I have to be boosted and pulled, and I'm too heavy for you; there is a good deal of weight still left in my bones."

"Oh, if that's all, I'm strong enough for anything."

Jack eyed her with the utmost wistfulness. "You look strong," he went on, humbly cajoling. "You wouldn't come and sit beside me and let me lean on you, just for a minute?"

"You poor child, why not?"

It is possible that Virginia exaggerated the maternal quality of the impulse which made her so ready to take the boy in her arms and let him nestle his head luxuriously against her, like a weak and weary child. He gave a sigh of utter satisfaction. "How delicious you are! So soft and warm. It's heavenly to be here, but—you must be an awful humbug!"

"Humbug?" she questioned, enchanted to hear the little teasing note in his voice.

"Yes, deceitful! You make Henrietta think you are her kind, made up of pamphlets and ink, and all the time you are as frivolous as anybody."

"How do you make that out, please, sir?"

"Easy enough. No one whose heart and soul are truly fixed on street-cleaning and the like has time or money to smell of violets." Turning, he buried his face closer against her. "Listerine, perhaps, or tar soap, never violets."

"Don't you think, Jack, that you are just a little personal?"

"Personal! If you only knew the things I'm not saying for fear you'd be angry and stay away!"

Quivering and ardent, he tried to raise himself. "You are not provoked? You'll come again?"

"You silly child, you'll hurt yourself, do be still," murmured Virginia, her cheek almost resting on his crisp brown hair. "This boy," she mentally reassured herself, "is shut up all day with two automata and naturally wants petting. If I feel this as personal to myself, my vanity and self-consciousness will prevent my being of any use to him." Then, bending her head a little further, she kissed him on the forehead.

As she went downstairs Henrietta emerged from the parlor, full of praise for Miss Dryden's self-abnegation in giving so much time to humoring the fancies of a sick boy.

"Oh Miss Dryden," she added, "can't you stop for a cup of tea? Professor Richards is here."

"How is his dentition," said Virginia absently, "equine as ever?"

After the manner of an elephant with a pebble, Henrietta's mind slowly revolved this idea and expelled it as innutritious.

"No," she answered, "we haven't touched on that interesting topic to-day. We are talking over some lectures he is to give before a Mothers' Meeting at our Workingmen's Club. We were thinking of titles likely to attract. If only you can spare a few minutes, we should be so glad to have your opinion."

"We! We! Oh," thought Virginia, "what could be more suitable! I'll just step in and have a look at them. Heaven really does the handsome thing once in a while." She merely said, "Thank you, I should be very glad of a cup of tea."

Any reasonably acute observer could certainly have constructed a fairly correct image of Henrietta after one glance at that severely useful parlor. Sociological pamphlets, reviews, the publications of the Fabian Society, filled every table. On the marble mantel-piece stood two framed photographs, one of a noted labor leader, one of George Bernard Shaw.

After due greetings, Virginia was tempted to investigate whether Miss McCall and the Professor were at one in their literary tastes, as well as in the serious matters of life. Pointing to the latter picture she asked, "Is this gentleman also a favorite of yours, Dr. Richards?"

"I don't know him. Is he a friend of yours, Miss Dryden?"

"Oh, no!" she answered, hastening to cover her slip, "I only know his plays and those two novels."

"Plays!" Henrietta joined in; "I didn't suppose he wrote anything of that sort. My interest in him is as a reformer."

"Yes, he has written one or two little things, youthful indiscretions, probably," said Virginia, quickly closing the subject. "But tell me, please, about the lectures."

Henrietta gave her a cup of acrid, lemon-embittered tea, and with much aid from the Professor expounded a plan so evolutionary that Virginia privately foresaw the workingmen's wives emerging from these lectures with an impression of themselves as hens miraculously mothering monkeys, who, rapidly passing through a period of barbarism, would finally reach their full development as incorruptible voters.

Dr. Richards and Henrietta were in no doubt as to the advisability of the course itself, the only question was of adopting a scientific or a popular nomenclature.

Their minds worked together so harmoniously that Virginia repented at having broken in on such a happy tête-à-tête, and seized on the first pause to take her departure.

To her annoyance, Dr. Richards felt bound to accompany her, though Henrietta evidently had not exhausted her supply of questions.

It was a nipping March afternoon. Virginia's skirts flapped uncomfortably in a boisterous wind that also made savage dabs at her firmly attached hat.

Though the Professor's nose was bluish and his whole appearance distinctly shrivelled and frost-bitten, he showed an inopportune taste for sauntering.

"What an able woman!" Virginia began with enthusiasm. "It is always a pleasure to work with Miss McCall, she is so admirably systematic."

"Yes," assented the Professor, "she has a man's mind."

"And so indefatigable," added Virginia.

"Miss Dryden, pardon my interrupting, but I wish to seize this rare opportunity of seeing you alone to communicate with you on a matter of the greatest importance."

"What on earth?" thought Virginia, but she merely looked expectant.

"This is in the strictest confidence; it is not yet ripe for announcement," he went on.

"The blessed appropriateness of it," thought Virginia; then, looking at his strangely made face, she remembered Henrietta's angles and hoped Providence would be completely kind and not tarnish the fitness of this union by casting too many of its progeny on the world. The Professor was still talking. "I have had a most flattering call to a large Western University."

"Of course," said Virginia politely, "we shall be sorry to lose you."

"The salary is more than double what I now receive."

Virginia reflected that as Henrietta seemed well off, the pair would be really comfortable.

"Naturally, Miss Dryden, it is with regret that I shall leave a city where I count many warm friends, yet it is my hope not to go forth alone. I am trusting that the best, the most cherished of these friends may be induced to accompany me."

Virginia beamed at him with the utmost friendliness and encouragement. A perfect whirlwind of dust and paper whisked across the street, enveloping them in its gritty, biting embrace, merrily departing with Dr. Richards's hat. Virginia joined him in pursuing his property, and they soon ran it to earth down an area steps. Settling it firmly on his head, he went on as if there had been no interruption.

"Miss Dryden! Virginia!"

Virginia felt a whole bushel of scales fall from her eyes. She now recognized that his glance was tender, his attitude supplicating (yet assured, as well it might be), his voice full of sentiment. There was

no escape, but she made a brave try for it, saying, "And Miss McCall? She returns your feeling?"

"Miss McCall!" Wrath and disapproval spoke in his voice. "Miss McCall, as you have justly observed, is an excellent woman, but I cannot imagine how she, with such a marked lack of grace in mind and person, could fill any man's ideal of a wife."

Virginia felt tempted to remind him that viewed as a husband he was not exactly alluring.

"It is you, Miss Dryden, whom I have long looked upon as my fitting mate. It is impossible that you should be unprepared. Twice a month for two whole years I have visited you——"

"Mr. Richards, you are quite right. My stupidity is to blame for this." ("Better shoulder it than tell him I'd as soon have suspected a mummy," she thought.) "The mistake is mine, and I am sincerely sorry it has occurred. The honor you are doing me would make any woman proud and happy"—("I must talk till he has time to remember a few of my faults," she thought hopefully)—"the position you offer is a distinguished one, I must ever feel honored at your choice, but, believe me, I am not worthy of it. I am flippant, superficial, not what you think me."

"Dearest!"—his fatuous grin turned Virginia's sympathy to a thirst for vengeance,—"it is just because of those sweet, womanly weaknesses that I love you so."

("Oh! Oh! Oh!" she cried inwardly, "this is too much!")

"You are very kind, Dr. Richards, but I absolutely fail—to—reciprocate, and in such matters my sentiments never change. It is better for me to say this quite plainly, so that your feelings may not become more deeply involved."

He stopped short, surveying her with bitter disfavor. "Then I can only say, Miss Dryden, that I have been strangely mistaken in you. I have the honor of wishing you a very good-afternoon."

When Virginia went in from the wind, dust, and humiliation of the outer world to the firelit glow of her mother's drawing-room she experienced a grateful sense of mental and physical relief. Neither so fragile nor devout as to neglect the duty of being well dressed in a charming elderly style, Mrs. Dryden was making tea at a table bright with old silver. Her delicate fingers busied themselves methodically among the cups, while she listened to the talk of her companion, Father Tessaire.

Of all the spiritual advisers watching over an important convert this one only appealed to Virginia's taste. His gentle ways, spare figure, refined face, and close, clerical garb gave him the air of one of the subtle ecclesiastics who wind their way through the society of

great European capitals, but from his wise, tired eyes there looked out the soul of a human saint.

After Mrs. Dryden "went over" Virginia had been vaguely suspicious that certain visitors, polished emissaries from Rome, delightful if somewhat worldly graduates of Stoneyhurst, took an undue interest in her spiritual welfare, mistaking her tolerant indifference for sympathy. Father Tessaire alone had always seemed to understand and respect a forbearance which never tried to disturb her mother's satisfaction in the rites and promises of the Church, and although they seldom talked together, he inspired in her a feeling of real liking and confidence.

"Mother, dear," she began, "have you a cup for me?—good tea with cream? Miss McCall gave me something that must have been ink. I hope she didn't drink much of it herself."

Mrs. Dryden prepared the tea with dainty deliberation. Virginia asked Father Tessaire if he had heard the new mass by Father Perosi.

"No, Miss Dryden," he answered, "I've been out West on a mission." Hesitating, he added, "Will you think me a great meddler if I say that on seeing Mrs. Dryden after an absence of several weeks, I find her looking far from well?"

Virginia turned anxiously to her mother. "Think of my not seeing it! I suppose it's being with her every day that prevents my noticing."

"Why don't you try," he went on, "to take her away from these March winds?"

"The doctor did say," put in Mrs. Dryden plaintively, "that two months at Hot Springs would make me over."

"And you never told me, oh Mummy!"

"What does it matter about an old woman like me, dear?"

Mrs. Dryden really thought it mattered a great deal, but was too much of her day and generation to say so.

"Thank you, Father Tessaire," said Virginia cordially, "it was just like you to notice and think of telling me. Must you go now, so soon?"

"Yes," he answered, "I'm dining with Miss Rose Nancrede."

"They all make such a fuss about that woman," said Mrs. Dryden with a shade of complaint, as the door closed behind Father Tessaire. "It's the hardest thing in the world to get him to dine here, but he goes all the way into the country for her."

"Why do they make a fuss?" asked Virginia absently.

"Because the man she was engaged to was killed."

"Well," said Virginia, "that seems rather a good reason. How did it happen?"

"He was shot at Antietam. Of course, it was very sad at the time." Mrs. Dryden's sympathy was perfunctory.

"Dear me! I thought you meant some young girl."

"No, she must be nearly seventy,"—Mrs. Dryden was fairly launched on a mild grievance,—“and I think it's affectation to pretend never to get over a thing that happened so long ago. Then she dresses beautifully and takes the greatest interest in things, only she never troubles herself to call on anyone, but just lives in the country, and the people she wants go to her.”

"She must be rather nice, I think; but, Mummy, I want to tell you something."

This was contrary to precedent, but, overcome by a rare fit of expansiveness, Virginia simply couldn't contain her late misadventure. Mrs. Dryden brightened up in gratified expectation.

"Mummy, I've just been walking with Professor Richards, and the most absurd thing happened—vexatious too. What do you suppose he did? But I'll tell you, it's too foolish to guess."

"I fancy he asked you to marry him." Mrs. Dryden made this announcement with outward composure; amazement at such prescience deafened Virginia to a certain anxious interrogation in her mother's voice.

After a minute's thought she asked, "Is that a guess, or had you seen anything?"

"Seen!" said Mrs. Dryden with a touch of impatience. "Why, it's been evident for months what he's been thinking of. I suppose scientific men talk about skulls and things when other people would be quoting poetry or paying compliments. It's their way of making love—not very satisfactory, but it comes to the same thing in the end. What did you say to him?"

Here Virginia's powers of perception resumed their functions, and to her extreme dismay she realized that her mother was in doubt as to what answer the Professor had received.

"He was so nasty about it, Mummy. I never would have spoken, even to you, if he hadn't been so spiteful, and you mustn't tell Helen. He almost implied that I had been leading him on."

"Well, Virginia,"—her mother spoke with that air of mingled relief and reprobation with which a parent naturally chides a wayward child newly escaped a serious peril,—“I don't know what you expect. You have deliberately chosen queer associates; your own set of people weren't clever enough or public-spirited enough or something,—at all events, they didn't suit. Of course, all these men flock about you; the women they naturally belong with are much less attractive. You listen to everything they say, and they draw their own conclusions. You see what I mean? Why should they imagine you are thinking

only of their intellects? Poor Mr. Richards is terribly plain, but he probably feels like any other man."

"Mercy!" said Virginia, still reasonable and very contrite, "do you think it was my fault?"

"N-no." Mrs. Dryden spoke judicially. Somewhat in awe of her daughter's mental attainments, here she felt perfectly sure of herself, and relished the indisputable authority that on this point qualifies the feeblest mother to instruct the most competent spinster.

"N-no, I don't think you were to blame exactly, but I can quite see how he might."

Virginia looked at her mother with an expression of comic despair. "Well, one thing is certain, it won't hurt him. He's pleased with himself, and that's a great help in getting over things. Before long he'll wonder what he ever saw in me, then he will marry someone else, quick." She smiled mischievously at a vision of Henrietta ready for the rebound. "But, mother, since you have common-sense for us both, would you kindly tell me if you have noticed symptoms in any of the others?"

Mrs. Dryden was only too glad of an opening, but it would have been contrary to all her accepted canons of the art of conversation briefly to name her apprehensions.

"It is very hard to say about that sort of thing," she began far afield. "The kind of men I was accustomed to and the people your sister went with were so different. They were good friends or made love so you knew at once. When they do that a girl only has to decide if they are in earnest or just amusing themselves, and, of course, to make up her own mind." ("Not so very simple, after all," thought Virginia.) "Now these people only know how to talk about abstractions, and that is so misleading. They're so serious about everything too,"—Mrs. Dryden suppressed a little retrospective yawn. "There's one who puzzles me a good deal. He doesn't come often, but when he is here he never takes his eyes off you. He may be simply studying you as a problem, but I think some day he may——"

"Oh, don't." Virginia pleaded for mercy. Like many purely instinctive people, when Mrs. Dryden spoke of anyone who had made a strongly unpleasant impression on her, quite unconsciously she reflected something of their manner. A certain involuntary mimicry now made her daughter exclaim—"Not Professor Quighleigh?"

"I'm glad you feel that way about him, my dear," said her mother with complete satisfaction.

Virginia gave a searching glance. Yes, her own mother actually conceived her capable of considering any of these men in the light of a lover. No wonder Professor Richards looked on it as a foregone conclusion. Suddenly a tragic light seemed to break on her whole



existence. Could she have grasped life altogether by the wrong handle? Was there something abnormal, out of line, in her to produce such complications? Conditions had been favorable enough, but she had longed for higher, better things, and in what a slough she had landed when her own mother was afraid of her taking seriously a supple reptile of a degenerate like this Quighleigh, a clever creature, no doubt, but as liable to impress her personally as some cringing, serviceable little courier.

There came one of those painful, imperfect flashes of insight which suddenly illumine the path of our difficulties without revealing remedy or escape. She had neutralized natural instincts by a determined and unnatural tolerance, as if in trying for a higher intellectual plane she had merely blunted her sense of selection. These reflections suggested no outlet, merely the certainty that a defect of character or way of life alone could bring her to such straits. In her mortification she had a sudden sense of comfort in remembering Jack's spontaneous interest and affection. With so natural and simple a human being frankly liking her, she couldn't quite have lost all normal qualities.

This train of thought was arrested by hearing her mother give a little, hacking cough, and she put aside the thankless task of self-analysis to observe more closely Mrs. Dryden's state of health.

## V.

As a result of these observations, in a fortnight's time the two ladies were comfortably established at the Springs, where in the baths Mrs. Dryden found not only bodily benefit, but an acceptable substitute, in the way of occupation, for the many gentle religious duties with which spiritual advisers kept her supplied at home.

Virginia read, wrote, and took long rides, straying for hours through disused lumber roads, learning to know the aspect of every mountain, forgetting the strain and stress of ordinary life. Here among the hills spring was little more advanced than it had been at home in February, when she and Jack had stood looking down at the furry caterpillar. Leaf-buds were only a trifle more swollen, the twigs perhaps showed redder; here and there was the crimson bloom of a swamp maple. On these solitary rides she thought a great deal of Jack, missing him more than she would have confessed. Their leavetaking had really seemed quite severe upon his feelings. He had all but insisted upon joining her at the Springs, though the doctor inexorably commanded sea air. Virginia brought all her influence to bear in inducing him to be docile, and finally made him accept an invitation to a hunting party in the West which would occupy the whole summer.

As he kissed her good-by she resolved that when he came back in

the autumn, well and vigorous, such indulgences must stop. While he was a weak, pathetic invalid it would have been ridiculous to deny him any harmless pleasure, but she could not countenance a habit which might look rather odd, though, as a matter of fact, Jack himself seemed to realize as much and never made the smallest demonstration in the presence of a third person.

His letters at first were frequent, but, to tell the truth, not very remarkable; Virginia decided that at present his charm was purely personal. As a developed man he might be interesting or commonplace. Still, since he seemed to take their corresponding as a matter of course, she sent him an occasional answer.

With the advancing season golfers began to arrive at the Springs. To their society Virginia preferred her lonely rides by day, and in the evening the company of those invalids whose inactivity prevented their knowing a tee from a hazard. Then a friend of the Blands' turned up, one Dick Bassett, a lover of horses, so completely a type and so little an individual that Virginia was mildly surprised to discover that he had a few personal preferences, though these were chiefly confined to his choice of food.

On the evening of his arrival he asked permission to sit at her table in the dining-room. When he had finished an after-dinner cigar he joined her in walking up and down the long veranda. He spoke in a quiet, impersonal voice, but with an evident desire to make himself agreeable.

"What do you do with yourself all day, Miss Dryden? You don't look as if you needed to put in much time at massage and that sort of thing. Do you play golf?"

"No," she answered, "I've so far escaped the seductions of golf. I ride a good deal."

"Indeed!" His voice betrayed no desire to dwell upon this subject. Like all of his class, he considered women in the light of a pleasing diversion, but deplored the idea of their mixing with the serious business of life. If he had his way, none of them should ever own or mention a horse. If a woman wished to please him, she would call a stallion "she" and keep her mouth-destroying hand and back-galling body in a Victoria, where they belonged.

Virginia caught the note of holding back, and, attributing it to a fear of its being incumbent upon him to ask her to ride, she excused herself and left him to continue his walk alone. "Of course," she reflected, "this smart horsy person thinks me a frump, but he is well bred and shows every necessary attention to the sister of his friends."

A few days later, to her mingled chagrin and amusement, at the meeting of two wood-paths Fate placed her and Mr. Bassett in such close proximity that they were compelled to join forces or pointedly

avoid each other. As they rode along, single file, Dick was forced to acknowledge to himself that in combination with a horse Miss Dryden was less obnoxious than most women. With surprise he noted how she picked out soft bits for her horse's feet. She sat light, true and square to her horse's ears. The animal was well in hand, yet not fretted by a tight rein. Above all, she made none of those would-be knowing remarks that are so trying to the patience of an expert. They emerged from the path to the highway at the foot of a long hill, up which the road wound for several miles to the hotel. Directly facing them was a little angle of uninclosed land, where, under the spreading arms of a noble oak, a tribe of gypsies made ready for the night. They were not the ordinary English gypsies of the North, but a wild, Oriental-looking set, strange, hairy men, half-savage women bright with scarlet draperies and gold-coins. On the ground wallowed a miscellaneous litter of alien dogs and babies, shaggy horses wandering loose picked for early tufts of grass at the roadside. Over a blazing fire two men were hanging a heavy black pot.

The whole scene was strikingly picturesque and unexpected, but not to the taste of two city-bred saddle-horses. They snorted and, throwing up their heads, came to an abrupt stop. Virginia and Mr. Bassett instinctively steadied them with rein and voice.

Good, responsive beasts, in most emergencies they were willing enough to trust their riders, but there are sights about which no horse can wait to be reassured.

From under one of the ark-like wagons issued a waddling form which made slowly towards the riders, and the horses' outraged eyes rested on a small, alert, sociable bear, whose odor also insulted their distended nostrils. Dick's strong man's arm was as inadequate as Virginia's feminine muscles. One sniff, one bound, and the terrified creatures were off, luckily heading up the hill towards their stable.

Virginia's horse was slightly in advance. Mr. Bassett watched the first sharp turn of the road with terrified anxiety. In spite of the tremendous pace, the horse did not throw itself, the rider kept her seat. She seemed to understand the time had not come for pulling, but after a couple of miles, when the hill had begun to tell on her horse, to his unspeakable relief he saw that she had sufficient strength and wind left to exercise some control. His own animal showed signs of having quite enough of it, and in a few minutes both horses, sweating and trembling, had come down to a nervous walk. Dick came to Virginia's side. She was pale, smiling, with clear, sparkling eyes, hair still smooth, hat in place.

"That was a good run," she said gayly, "and now I should enjoy walking my horse home, but if we don't give the poor things a lesson they'll be ruined."

"You mean?" he queried.

"Shouldn't we make them gallop all the rest of the way till they forget they ever had a fancy for running?"

"Of course," he assented, "that is what a man would do, but I should think you had about all you want; your arms must be nearly pulled out of the sockets."

By way of answer she urged her horse to a canter, and no further word was exchanged till they drew up in front of the hotel.

The next morning Dick Bassett left by the early stage, sending Virginia a somewhat formal note of farewell.

He felt a sudden need of self-communion free from disturbing influences. He was running from something which he had never even regarded as a possible danger. A methodical soul, he was opposed to all ill-considered action, and consequently decided to retire to a distance in order to subject his state of mind to the closest scrutiny.

On reading his note Virginia remarked to her mother, "Poor man, he needn't have run off. I did not expect him to ride with me again."

Mrs. Dryden's face assumed an expression at once wise and furtive, but no word of comment escaped her lips.

By the time the woods were clouded with the first fragrant bloom of wild azalea a letter came from Jack giving his summer plans. After a preliminary trip through the West his party were going into camp in an inaccessible part of Wyoming; once in three months there might be a mail.

One sentence gave Virginia an odd sense of uneasiness. He wrote: "In September I shall be twenty-two and come into my own estate. Do you half realize what that means to me?"

She thought a good deal about this, but decided that it was absurd to attach any serious meaning to such a hint; definite apprehensions were allayed by the reflection that returning health with new and exciting experiences would cool only too quickly this over-ardent friendship.

During the summer Virginia enjoyed perfect immunity from such complications as had arisen from Professor Richards's misplaced affections. At the various resorts patronized by Mrs. Dryden the society was overwhelmingly feminine, with an appreciable sprinkling of elderly married clergy and very young lads. To her mortification, this absence of trouble brought Virginia no accession in peace of mind, but she planned an amount of winter occupation that would leave scant time for vapors.

Towards the end of September Mrs. Dryden went to her married daughter for a long visit, and Virginia made the excuse of some work to settle in town. Dorothy had gone to boarding-school. The rest

of the Blands bored Virginia past endurance; the friends who swarmed their house thought themselves smart and impressed her as vulgar.

As she was leaving home one morning a telegraph-boy stopped her on the step. She opened the yellow envelope with no special anticipation beyond all unrecognized hope that perhaps, after all, Mrs. Anderson might have changed her mind about coming to spend the night.

She read:

"Will be at your house at five to-day, Thursday, the twenty-eighth. Answer, Union Station telegraph office.

"J. McCALL."

Virginia sent the answer and went about her day's work feeling unaccountably cheerful and alive.

At four o'clock a problem cropped up, whether to keep on her workaday clothes or to wear a thin dress of creamy muslin which she guiltily knew to be becoming. She subtly reasoned that her only effort should be towards naturalness. The day was warm. Not to wear a cool dress because Jack was coming savored of affectation.

At five o'clock the asphalt still simmered in the sun. In the house cool, linen-covered furniture and bare floors gave relief from the powdery glare without.

If Virginia had chosen to encourage the likeness, in line and expression she bore a striking resemblance to that warm, beautiful St. Helena of Veronese, who looks so little a subject for heavenly visions, and so nobly fit to live a woman's life on earth. To-day, whatever the reason, perhaps the soft, creamy dress, no one could less suggest her self-imposed role of austere philanthropist than this woman who waited, touched with the mellowness of maturity, yet full of the flexibility and sap of youth.

A hansom rattled up to the door—Jack had come.

Virginia was prepared for a mildly sentimental meeting. What happened was more like the attack of a whirlwind. Instead of the pathetic, fragile creature of her recollections, a sunburned man swept down upon her. Too quick for thought or resistance, she was seized, kissed, and held with masterful strength. Almost overpowered by the surprise, the shock, and the surging currents of her own rebellious blood, for a moment she yielded utterly, then merely tried to draw gently away. Without freeing her, he slightly loosed his hold till he could see her face, and spoke, remonstrating, "Surely you aren't trying to leave me already?"

Something in his tone gave Virginia a perfectly new sensation; she was frightened. A glance at him confirmed her fears; the adolescent was gone, Jack had grown up. She had a man to deal with, but how?

Illness, the rush of returning health, new life under developing conditions, knowing her, perhaps, had wrought the change. There was no blinding her eyes to the fact that whatever their respective ages, they now stood to each other in the primitive relation of man and woman; beyond the change in him, something in her sounded a note of warning, something not to be disregarded. But how was she to meet this without unjustifiably wounding his feelings? Moreover, besides convincing him, she had to struggle against this vital part of herself which had unaccountably defaulted to his side. With dread she recognized that her head alone condemned this hot, virile contact, that she had the strongest impulse to let herself go, to drift down stream, to take what he gave, since it was pleasant, without further thought. Why not drink to the dregs this sweet, fiery cup of youth, and then face the problem, having at least lived through some space of golden hours?

The young man was trembling with happiness and emotion. After the first wild onslaught he was filled with worship of her. A sense of resistance for a moment made him masterful, but now he read yielding in her face and quickly grew humble and adoring.

"Virginia," he murmured, close to her ear, "we mustn't be parted again ever, not for an hour. All these months I've been wanting you so,"—he drew a deep breath,—“and you're lovelier, softer, dearer even than I thought. It is just beginning, and we are going to be like this always. Let us go somewhere now and be married right off! I can't live another day without you.”

If Virginia could at that moment have willed herself to die a torturing and disgraceful death, the idea would have been easy and pleasant compared to the prospect now opening out before her.

"Jack!" The sadness of her voice alarmed his sensitive ear. She laid one gently repelling hand against him. "What do you mean? Why are you talking about?"—she hesitated at the word—"marrying?"

"Why!" His strong young hands seized her shoulders almost roughly. He looked hard at her face till she couldn't bear it, and slowly dropped her eyelids.

Suddenly he stooped and kissed her. "There; of course, you are only laughing, but don't do it again, dear. I care too much to be very keen about the humorous side of things. When we are married and off together you may joke all you like, but now, after not seeing you for months, I'm obliged to be serious."

There was a touch of authority in his manner. Superficially he might appeal to her and be docile, at bottom he considered her his, the woman who belonged to him, and any attempt to disregard this brought out a savage gleam of possession.

"Jack, dear Jack!"—for the life of her she couldn't subdue a

certain caressing tone of voice,—“till this minute I never dreamed of your wanting to marry me. You don't really, it's just an idea.”

“You've no right to say that,” he interrupted. “You evidently don't want to marry me, but you can't answer for my feelings too.”

“Indeed,” she went on, “you mustn't think about it. Please, please be reasonable.”

He let her go quickly, as if she burned him; crossed the room to a table and mechanically turned the pages of a magazine. Watching him in utter misery, Virginia realized that he was not only hurt but shocked. Finally he moved towards her and spoke, in a low, hard voice.

“Reasonable, is it? Very well; and perhaps you'll kindly answer a question or two?”

Virginia made a sign of assent, feeling it wasn't enough to send him off; she was in honor bound first to comfort him, to console his pain, for pain it was, not wounded self-love. That might come later, but at this minute no one could doubt the genuineness of his hurt. He continued in the same repressed tone: “You say you never dreamed of my wanting to marry you! What on earth did you suppose I was after? You've every right to think me a bounder for saying this, but do you usually, if you don't mean to marry a man—— Pshaw! I can't say it. I know there are lots of women who do, who think nothing of letting a man——”

“You were ill,” she pleaded.

“I know I was ill. If Dr. Richards were ill, would you do as much for him?”

“Oh Jack! that's different!”

“Different! That is just what I'm saying. Do you want me to think you let men—— I'd rather believe you meant to fool me.”

Poor Virginia felt her unknown sin must be heavy to meet with such cruel punishment. If she made out a good case for herself, he would only adore her the more. To let him think ill of her would surely damage his uncorrupted ideal of life. Of course, he would recover as far as she was concerned, but she knew how often a young man emerges from such a bout with lowered instincts and a sense of violated trust. It was the irony of fate that Jack's young virtues should be tarnished through having known her.

It would be easier if only he showed vanity or pettiness, but he was behaving like a real lover, with less heed of dignity than passion.

“Tell me,” he went on relentlessly, “am I one of many?”

Shaking her head, she answered with convincing earnestness: “See, Jack, you misunderstand. Listen, please. You are almost young enough to be my son; I never thought of you in any other way. You

were just a sick, helpless child. It was a pleasure to be with you. I liked you, of course, but——”

“Very well,”—Jack showed amazing mental agility,—“I was crazy and didn’t understand, anything you like. We’ll skip everything till to-day, though how you could miss knowing——”

“Please believe me,” she entreated.

“Yes, I do,” he went on, “but now you do know you must begin to think about it from this minute. Of course, I’m just a cub of a boy, but not particularly weak or helpless, and do you believe if I were fifty or a hundred I could love you any better? I only claim a fair show. The real question has nothing to do with age, it’s the way we feel. Now, after this misunderstanding, I think you are bound to give me a chance, that’s all. If you don’t like me, that’s my bad luck, but you’ve no right to keep yourself from it, just for an abstract idea.”

Virginia shook her head. “No use, Jack.”

He drew near her, speaking in a very different voice, coaxing, deprecating. “Virginia, of course this is very cheeky, but are you so sure? Couldn’t you care a little even now if you’d let yourself go? I know I’ve nothing to make a woman like you care, only sheer love of you, but that is something.”

As she looked at him, tall, handsome, manly, Virginia felt a lover could hardly have more to offer.

“Virginia, I must say this, if you think me the worst cad for it. Just now I do believe you only held back because you thought you ought to mind!”

The perfect truth of this made Virginia flush crimson. She had found none of the succor that comes from physical repulsion. To drive him away was a pure concession to her code of taste and conscience. She could have enjoyed humoring him to the top of his bent for a day or a week, but even at this minute, keenly aware of his attraction, she could not conceive of him in the light of a husband. He was no permanent companion for her, he was a college boy, not precocious merely—charming, and she was a mature adult, mature but in some way pitifully unsymmetrical, since one part of her so fully responded to his appeal, while her brain refused even to consider it. She felt an end must be put to the discussion, it was no matter for debate. She simply couldn’t marry him, she must send him off, hurt and resentful. That was evidently part of her punishment—for what? For merely misunderstanding life a little the retribution was heavy.

Walking away from him, she stood looking miserably into the empty fireplace. In a minute he was close behind her, had taken her hand, both hands, enveloped, pressed against her till she could neither breathe



nor think. His lips touched her hair, and still she suffered him, vainly summoning power to leave him, unable to stiffen her recreant body in resistance. It was sweet, sweet to feel him there, strong and masterful.

"What nonsense, Virginia." He spoke impatiently. "As if I didn't know you'd send me off quick enough if you minded. Now it comes to this, either you like me pretty well, or you're willing, yes, willing, Virginia, to take this, and this"—his aggressive lips ravaged her hair, her throat—"from a man who's nothing to you. Do you dare to tell me that?"

The door-bell rang and a notable bustle and movement came from the entry, dominated by a firm woman's voice. "Yes, take my bag to my room, please, I'll stop in the parlor and see Miss Dryden."

By the time Mrs. Anderson crossed the threshold Virginia and Jack were decorously standing some yards apart.

Now he must go, thought Virginia as she said: "Too bad you can only stay one night, Mrs. Anderson. Do sit here; you must be hot and tired." She herself sank into a chair, bewildered to see the complete self-possession with which Jack found Mrs. Anderson a footstool, a fan, picked up her gloves and handkerchief. Virginia realized that this helpless child was engaged in ably protecting her too visible agitation.

"Good-by, Miss Dryden"—he spoke with brisk confidence. "Oh! I'd almost forgotten a message"—he paused. "Shall you be at home at nine to-morrow?" Seeing resistance in her face, he added, "My sister, Henrietta, wants to see you."

"You surprise me," interrupted Mrs. Anderson. "I made sure she was still in Alaska."

Jack's eyes danced. "That certainly was the hour," he answered imperturbably.

"He knows she's in Alaska," thought Virginia. "I'm busy at nine," she answered shortly.

"Ten, then?"

"Busy all day, every day all this week, all this month."

"All right, then, Monday, October first, at ten o'clock. Henrietta will have that interview. Henrietta, Miss Dryden, is a very persistent person. If she's made up her mind, you'll have to see her sooner or later. Ten o'clock then, you won't forget?" He stood looking down at her, speaking so peremptorily that Mrs. Anderson began to show uneasiness. "Surely it's important if Miss McCall makes such a point. You'd better say yes, Miss Dryden."

"Thank you, Mrs. Anderson, you are perfectly right. Tell me, Miss Dryden, when will you see Henrietta?"

"Monday at ten," said Virginia, fairly beaten.

## VI.

DRAD of Jack's reappearance made Virginia thankful to spend Saturday night at the Blands', but her satisfaction was much impaired at arriving in the thick of what Helen called "a little house party over Sunday." The "house party" were in full swing of afternoon tea, swarming about a table where decanters and siphons were considerably more in evidence than teacups. A Babel of voices and laughter rose from the group. Standing in the doorway, Virginia caught a sentence here and there. "Yes,"—the speaker was a lively, flagrant blonde,—"he said, 'not a bit like a scalloped lobster, I think you look more like a dressed fowl, Mrs. Reverdy.' Too impudent for anything, but pretty good all the same, wasn't it?"

Amid the applause following this witticism Billy Bland could be heard explaining: "Good enough! Dressed fowl! That means nothing on, doesn't it, Mabel—not a feather?"

"Oh, that is nothing, absolutely, to what he said to me——"

"Dear me," said Helen, "here is Virginia! You all know my sister, Miss Dryden?"

Although Virginia neither liked nor approved of them, it was not pleasant to be regarded as such a hopelessly wet blanket that on her approach cigarettes were thrust away, glasses set down untouched, and the whole crew of merrymakers resolved into a rather dully decorous tea-party.

As their ranks opened to admit her, one person came from the background with a frankly cordial greeting; it was Mr. Bassett.

She felt genuinely glad to see him; he recalled a delightful remembrance of flying through space on a runaway horse, a thrilling sensation fraught with no worse penalty than blistered hands and aching muscles.

Before Dick could do more than shake hands the dressing-bell scattered the whole assemblage, but at dinner he was her neighbor.

"Awful rot those women talk," he began in a cautious voice which grew even lower as he went on, "and they think they're such dead game sports. Do you know, Miss Dryden, there's not one of them can ride decently. Crooked in the saddle everyone. Any of them would have broken the horse's neck and her own that day!"

"Wasn't it fun!" said Virginia, with a comfortable sense of returning self-respect.

"I was scared," he answered quite unaffectedly. Then, growing deeply confidential: "Look here, Miss Dryden, I thought maybe you'd be with Helen to-morrow, so I just sent over my horse with one for you and a side saddle. Not to Billy's stable, you know, to the village with my own man to look after them. There's not another woman I'd let touch them, but won't you go for a turn to-morrow?"

"Virginia," called Helen from the head of the table, "did you bring a short skirt? We are all going to play hide and seek in the barn to-morrow morning."

"Good Lord!" muttered Dick, "go with me instead."

"My short skirt is in town; besides, I've another engagement, thank you, Nelly," said Virginia, devoutly thankful for the excuse. "See what you saved me from, Mr. Bassett," she whispered; "fancy me playing hide and seek!"

Late that night Helen strayed into Virginia's room to indulge in a little sisterly chat.

"Do you know, Virginia," she said, "you are changing very much in your appearance."

"Getting old, I suppose," Virginia answered without rancor.

"No, not at all; there would be nothing out of the way in that. You always had good looks you didn't care to use; you might easily have made yourself a beauty. I don't mean touching up or that sort of thing, but just thinking about it a little. Now it seems to have come in spite of you. You've got a look I can't describe, '*L'air fatal*' the French novels call it. Have you anything on hand, any affair?"

Virginia colored. "What nonsense, Nelly, dear; I'm rather tired, that's all, and being a nice, charitable sister, you find me interesting looking."

"Is that really all?" said Helen, visibly disappointed. "But you know you needn't talk as if you were out of the running. Lots of men would be ready to admire you if you hadn't some dried-up old thing always tagging on to you."

"By the way, Nelly," Virginia began, somewhat precipitately, "can you lend me a habit? I'm going to ride with Mr. Bassett to-morrow."

"Well, Virginia, you are foxy! I thought you looked as if something were up. So it's Dick. He's an awfully good fellow; Billy and I are so fond of him." She was positively beaming.

"Helen, dear!" Virginia protested, "poor Mr. Bassett; I haven't laid eyes on him for over six months, and he would never speak to me again if he imagined such a construction being put on his asking me to ride."

"You're wrong, Virginia. Mabel and all of them have been pestering him to ride; he never will. He talked more to you at dinner than he has done to anyone else in years. He'll ask you to marry him to-morrow, see if he doesn't!"

"Well," said Virginia in a tone of intense dejection, "I shall be very sorry if he does; but if there is anything of that kind, it's as well to go through with it and have it over. The sooner the better. I'm going back to town to-morrow afternoon, anyhow."

"You don't mean to say you won't take him! Why, Virginia,

he's—he's nice looking and well off and awfully good-natured, in for everything, but never loses his head, would never run after other women——”

“I only trust he doesn't mean to run after me. He's much too nice for me, I know, but somehow I don't quite see him in the light of —of——”

“Well, have your own way, as usual, Virginia, but if Dick Bassett is not good enough I really don't see what you expect. Poor Billy will be awfully cut up too. Dick's just the kind of man he would like in the family.”

“I see no reason for Billy's ever knowing; besides, I don't believe Mr. Bassett has the slightest idea of such a thing. He certainly has done nothing to make me think so. Good-night, and don't scold me any more, Nelly, dear.”

In spite of her protests, Virginia felt considerable dread of Dick Bassett. If by any chance Helen were right, the only fair course was to hear him and settle matters at once, but it would be a bad quarter of an hour for both of them. With Jack's voice ringing in her ears, his face before her eyes, she felt there would be desecration in listening, however unwillingly, to another man's addresses.

She looked carefully at herself in the glass and saw what Helen had noticed, visible as a brand. She knew the look in other women's faces when they were breathing the hot, spiced atmosphere of pressing adoration. She had always found something despicable in their taking from one lover a quality that gave added value in the eyes of the next man they happened to meet, as if by warming themselves at one fire they gained heat to kindle others. Now the same thing had happened to her; what she experienced with Jack emphasized a flavor which attracted this other man.

The Professor Richards and Dick Bassetts of this world might have gone on addressing her forever without causing more than a passing regret or annoyance; with Jack it was different. He appealed to something in her which threatened mastery, something to be kept in check by the strongest effort of will, yet she hadn't the slightest wish to choose him as a companion for life.

The long night brought Virginia no counsel; turn where she might, every train of thought led up to a locked door, at which her reason beat in vain.

She was filled with a sick disgust of herself, and the morning found her weary and plunged in doubt.

She only knew that Nature seemed to demand living true to certain laws, and these laws are masked and contorted so relentlessly that often the first knowledge of them comes from the avenging punishment following their infraction.

Dick's behavior on the ride made her plan a triumphant scene with Helen. He talked horse with single-minded fervor till they reached a certain cross-road; then, looking at his watch, "Just two miles from home," he said; "plenty of time before lunch. Shall we walk, to bring them in cool? Besides, I've something to say."

If Virginia could have suddenly evolved them, a bear, myriads of bears, a pack of wolves, the Wild Huntsman himself, would have appeared to incite their well-mannered horses to a frenzied career along the quiet road. Failing that, there was nothing to do but acquiesce and hope that Helen's talk alone made her read an ominous note into his voice. Helen was right!

When they entered the Blands' avenue the worst was over, and in some curious fashion it had become Dick's part to console Virginia in a distress so genuine that he almost forgot his own disappointment.

"Don't worry, Miss Dryden, it wasn't your fault. I'd gladly take my chances and do the same thing again, you are worth it. Only, if you feel differently, ever, you must let me know. You see, I can't come back and bother you if it upsets you like this."

Virginia's eyes were full of tears, she could only shake her head.

"Do you mind"—he spoke very hesitatingly—"saying if—if—there's anyone you like better?"

Virginia quickly turned away.

"I wish it had been you, Mr. Bassett," she said with a sob.

## VII.

As she neared her town-house that afternoon Virginia was joined by the obnoxious little Dr. Quighleigh, whose evident intention of paying a visit suffered no check from her manner, stiffened almost to rudeness by a recollection of Mrs. Dryden's doubts about his state of mind. His opening sentence, however, effectually made her ashamed of a false alarm.

"Miss Dryden, you have saved my life. I'm overflowing with the scheme for a new book, positively must talk it over with someone, and you are particularly fitted to help me with advice and suggestions."

Greatly relieved, Virginia resigned herself to be bored, and assumed a mechanical air of interest as he went on.

"The whole idea is strictly original. You see, with the present widespread interest in psychology a popular work, touching on some of the most vital problems of the present day, is sure of finding a large and sympathetic public. Don't you agree with me?"

Virginia, who was only following hazily, nodded vague assent.

He went on: "Of course, success means a great deal to me, at this point in my career; but beyond that, I believe it to be the duty of every scientist, particularly in such personal and experimental branches

as mine, to tabulate and preserve valuable observations, both as abstract formulas and as comments on the life about us. My great chance is writing for women. The field of morbid psychology possesses the deepest fascination for the modern woman, and I feel specially qualified to throw light on certain dark places."

Virginia simply wasn't listening. She looked at the speaker's little Aztec head, with its glistening, unduly responsive eyes and unnaturally hairless face. The sight offended her. She turned away, wishing he would go home and write his tiresome book.

Unabashed by her silence, he continued: "Of course, the subject I propose treating is rather delicate, but by a little adjustment it may be put in such form that every home, every Women's Club in the country, should own its copy. Now, as a modern scientific man, naturally I haven't wasted much time over the classics."

"Do you consider that time wasted?" Virginia now buckled down to the task of getting rid of him.

He smiled leniently. "The necessary points are so easily found in any good work of reference. In an hour at the library I guarantee to have at my finger-ends the nomenclature and leading legends of the Græco-Roman mythology. But to go back to my work, the title is 'The Crimes of the Vestal Virgins?'"

"Indeed," said Virginia with most forbidding emphasis.

"Yes, a striking name. Of course, I know nothing about them, but it is easy to a trained mind to get up the local color."

"I should consider such matters best treated in purely scientific books, if it be necessary to treat them at all."

Virginia's tone was final.

The small Professor smiled complacently. Wherever she looked, his clever, gleaming eyes seemed to catch hers.

"No, Miss Dryden, it is the popularity which makes the highest value of my book. Of course, you see, it's just a parable written for the women of to-day. It is the Vestal Virgin as an allegory, as a prototype of such women as yourself. You are sufficiently liberal to talk freely on these matters," he went on, unheeding her emphatic gesture of dissent; "women who for some reason in their lives determinedly ignore the ruling power of the universe—sex! Happening now every day, this can be best described in a fable of the past. I often look at you, Miss Dryden, and wonder what your final catastrophe will be. You, who, however you may repudiate it, are to your finger-ends as full of sex as—as Ceres. You——"

Quivering with anger and disgust, Virginia stood erect. She pointed to the door. "Go! Go at once!"

He rose, hesitating, and looked at her with his little, shiny eyes. "I was about to ask your permission to dedicate——"

She stamped her foot imperiously. "Do you want me to send for someone to put you out?"

When he was well away she tried to forget his visit, but the nastiness of it seemed to have touched and soiled her. "Filthy little wretch," she thought. "And it's possible he believes he means well with his tainted ideas." It relieved her to think about Jack, to plan some way of meeting him to-morrow which should neither hurt nor mislead him. Through a solitary dinner her mind seemed to be working somewhere in the distance independently of her consciousness, now and again sending back an obscure hint of revelations to come. All at once everything moved, came into line and focus, as if the world had suddenly emerged from chaos, but what a world! That loathsome little wretch had thrust the key into her hand, the door stood open, she understood. In the evening for long hours she sat reviewing her conscious existence. That was it, he had told her what was wrong with her life, and she knew him to be right. The past was irrevocable, but she had the future to look to. Her confidence was gone; she felt a monster unsuited to any path open to her to tread. Before dawn some decision must be made. Slowly she revolved all possible remedies, and in turn rejected each. She was a criminal on trial before the most relentless judge. Her strained nerves seemed deceptively quiet and strong, she was prepared to bow to any decree.

The servant closed the house for the night; still Virginia sat there. Towards morning a sparrow chirped, a block or so away was a faint sound of horses' hoofs.

Virginia rose and stretched her cramped arms, then, after writing one letter, she went to bed and slept.

Her decision was made.

#### VIII.

THE next morning Jack waited in the drawing-room braced for a final struggle. There was in Virginia something which he instinctively recognized as an ally, far as he might be from analyzing her difficulties.

She had been brutally made to see herself as a morbid product of a civilization which, granting a woman mind and soul, makes no provision for the sturdier, earthier part of her. That she, in no high sense in love with him, could enjoy his presence as a lover would have been a shocking and repulsive idea to Jack. He felt in her an ungovernable response to his passion, and could only attribute it to an affection as complete as his own.

She had begged him to be reasonable; consequently, with a view to convincing her, he came primed with examples in which disparity of age had proved no bar to happiness. He stood equally prepared for hot lovemaking or talk of George Eliot and Diane de Poitiers.

When Virginia came into the room his sharpened sensibilities quivered with the surprise of a new atmosphere. She glided in with quietest motion; her presence reached him like a penetrating perfume. She was heavy-laden with mystery, warmth, softness; smouldering fires breathed from her. Conscience, duty, suitability seemed nothing but ugly names.

He had come to conquer a reasoning adversary, and found as little need to argue as if she were some creamy flower glowing white in the gleam of a summer moon. An older man would have mistrusted so sudden a change.

With the unshattered joy of youth, Jack swept along on the tide, unquestioningly seizing the golden happiness she gave him with such lavish hand. After a time he could speak to her, tender, half playful, lost in a new world, a new heaven.

"Please, tell me, am I dreaming, or is that the very dress you wore the day we first walked in the country?"

"The very dress, the very linen shirt and tie."

Her low, vibrating voice had a strange sound, as if it followed the rhythm of unheard music.

"And that makes me think, Jack, can't we pass this day doing pleasant things, things we have done before? This is a day, just one in our whole lives; there can never be another like it. Let us go into the country and look down over the valley——"

"Yes! Yes!" he broke in eagerly. "We'll wander about the woods all day, and to-night come back to town—yes! and dine at Bertrand's, and sit at the same table. Oh Virginia! how did you ever imagine I could live without you?"

"All that is over now. Let's forget it," she pleaded softly. "To-day we are going to think neither of past nor future. Time for that later. To-day we are going to live like blessed creatures who can never know thought or care. Promise me, dear, no plans to-day, nothing but slow, happy minutes, minutes slipping through our fingers, without heed for the next hour. Oh Jack, I'm so tired of the old life!"

"And a little glad of the new?" he asked shyly.

The soft color rose in her white face, her eyes fell before his. "Do you need to ask that?" she whispered.

The country was mellow with the heartrending sweetness of early autumn. Here and there in a sugar-maple a cluster of yellow leaves hinted at the change that was to come in hill and valley, of sap buried in roots deep under frozen earth, of blighted, tender leaves, of perished beauty. As yet all was sound, good, and full of life, but death lurked in the air.

They walked by orchards where under gnarled apple-trees rude



cider-presses gave out their tainted fragrance. In the fields yellow ears of corn and pumpkins lay piled at the foot of dry, rustling corn-stacks. Small birds in black flocks settled down gleaning in the stubble, to rise in circling flights, disturbed by the passers. In the short, velvety grass between two cart-tracks Jack gathered a dozen violets.

"Shall we share them?" asked Virginia, smiling.

Their talk was fragmentary, a touch, a glance, a word.

"Look," said Virginia, "at that little path! It crosses the field, turns into long grass beyond till you can't see where it goes, but you know it doesn't stop. It winds on somewhere to some purpose. It looks so innocent, yet it is full of hidden ways. Who can guess where it may lead?"

"Rabbit-shooting you often go along those paths. I can't say I ever found any mystery at the end of them," said Jack lazily. "Usually a stile or a spring, once in a while a queer old country graveyard, little and walled in. Shall we see where this one goes?"

"No, by no means, please," Virginia shivered, adding, at his look of surprise, "I think uncertainty is so much more delicious than knowing."

They came at last to the very fence where they first had quarrelled. They leaned on it, looking down athwart the hillside at the woods, now faintly tinged with the first russets of autumn. Only this time they stood close, close, and Jack's arm was about her, and there was no talk of Dorothy.

They stood as quiet as the cherry-tree beside them; her hand lay upturned on the fence-rail. Above them in the branches was a sudden disturbance, a chicken-hawk chasing a small bird. The terrified quarry dropped from the boughs and lit for a second on Virginia's open palm, then frantically took shelter in a blackberry-bush at their feet.

Virginia grew white to her lips, but said nothing. Jack, careless of omens, was energetically throwing stones at the hawk.

Presently she called to him gayly, "I don't know how you feel, but it seems to me that we should have done well to think of lunch."

He looked comically rueful, "We aren't particularly near Delmonico's just now."

"Well!" Virginia spoke teasingly. "Of course, it is always a woman's part to remember."

"Look here," said Jack, "we don't want to go back to town, or eat poison in some stuffy tavern. Let's strike up the road. There is a village half a mile or so above. We can buy things at the store—apples and chunks of cheese and crackers and bottles of something."

"After all," sighed Virginia, flattering, "it is the man who really does things."

When they came back to town electric lights were sparkling blue

in the pink afterglow of a lingering sunset. The six o'clock flood of released working people had passed from the streets. Here and there a belated typewriter hurried along; two mechanics on bicycles chaffed each other, and, unembarrassed by dangling dinner-pails, lit potent black pipes. The town was full of an air of domesticity, of people meeting after the day's work. Virginia spoke to Jack of the daily sweetness of that hour with the pouring out of captives from shop and factory.

At Bertrand's Madame greeted them with a smile so beautiful that it was hard to realize its purely professional inspiration. The same table was vacant; it might have been the same waiter, were not all waiters brothers.

Jack found the table d'hôte too modest, they must have extra things, dishes that took long to cook, and wine, champagne—Virginia nodded approval to every order as he looked questioningly for her assent. What did it matter, she thought, how long this dinner should be. Finally it was over. As they went out Virginia was very quiet, Jack treading on air; the waiter displayed his tip to an envious brother, and gave an immense and facetiously benevolent wink in the direction of the departing couple.

They called a hansom and drove to Virginia's door. As Jack put out his hand to ring she stopped him.

"One minute, dear; please don't ring till you've bid me good-night," and she slipped into the deep shadow of the vestibule.

"Good-night! What are you saying? Aren't we to finish the evening together?"

"Please," she had come as close as he could wish, "please, I feel as if this day had been so full that nothing could be added to it. I can't explain, but I must be alone, just to be quiet and think. If you come in, I shall never be able to send you away. Please, please, understand. If you must, you must. It's for you to choose, but as a favor, dear, I ask that you go."

For one minute he held her in his arms, then quickly, without a word, left her.

Once she was alone, Virginia's actions grew quick and direct, as if prearranged to the least turn of her head. Speeding upstairs, she took from a desk the note she had written the night before, then for a second faltered, and through the masked tranquillity of her face flashed one gleam of the despair which was driving her, but for a second only. Composedly enough she read the note, sealed and stamped it; ringing for the servant, she gave orders to 'close the shutters early and not to expect her back that night. Then, with slow, ordered steps, she left the house.

In the street unconsciously she mended her pace; having slipped

the letter into a box at the first corner, she called a cab, gave a direction, and, sitting stiffly upright, with straining eyes, stared into the darkness. She had entirely ceased to think. Every faculty was merged in the determination to do one thing. Before her will snapped from the tension she must put it out of her power to do harm. That was the best she could now hope! Having started out to conquer life, meaning to avoid ordinary blunders, that was the end! Her mind was set on that piercing point, as aching eyes rivet their gaze on a flashing light.

When the cab drew up at a gravely impersonal dwelling-house she might have been driving for hours or seconds, all count of time was lost. A respectable elderly woman opened the door—a housekeeper, apparently. A glaring gas-jet lit an entry shining with frigid cleanliness. The polished wood floor was protected by a strip of loose carpet, as if furniture were being carried in. Virginia's outer consciousness was alive to the most trivial detail; within, she felt only numbness.

"Father Tessaire?" said the woman in answer to her question. "He's out now, but I expect him any minute. If you could wait, lady?"

Virginia felt suddenly jarred; the priest's being out was no part of her programme, it seemed an irretrievable misfortune, but in a second she knew it didn't in the least matter. The numbness was spreading; she could wait without danger to her resolution.

"To the right, Miss," said the woman, ushering her in. "I put the gentlefolk in this room, then there's always a fit place for them. The others track up the house so, I just keep this bit of carpet to save my clean floors."

Virginia smiled understandingly and sat down in the dreary room to wait, mechanically taking note of the bare white plaster walls, broken with a few intolerable chromos, Crucifixions, Holy Mothers with faces made grotesque and dropsical through cruelly poor reproductions. Before long all this seemed etched upon her brain till she could remember nothing else. Then doubts assailed her. Why was she here? When the priest came it would be easy to invent some pretext for her visit and go quietly home. But to-morrow! The note she had sent! That action was irrevocable. Irrevocable! What was to prevent her telephoning Jack to burn the note unopened, and to-morrow they could spend another day in the country, another day, a hundred days!

A latch-key in the door, a step. No, she was not numb. A choking leap of her heart showed how strong was the throbbing life within. The blood pulsating through her veins brought fresh misery.

Father Tessaire was already in the room, and every doubt had vanished. Pain had at least freed her from indecision.

"Miss Dryden, you honor me with a visit." He showed no surprise, but smiled a welcome, then, catching the tragedy of her face, grew suddenly grave and motioned her to be seated.

"Father Tessaïre"—she was speaking in a strange, cracked voice, the period of waiting had parched lips and throat till her usual mellow tones seemed lost forever. "Father," she began again, "you must take me now to-night and put me in a convent."

"Dear child,"—into his gentle voice insensibly there crept a note of authority,—"you have come here in trouble. If what you ask is your real wish, we can see to it later, but first we must examine if there is no other way."

"Father! Father!"—Virginia's own tones returned to her, but penetrated with the most despairing terror,—"you mustn't put me off. If I were drowning, you wouldn't stop to pick the spar you threw me! I'm at the end, the very end! Death or a nunnery, do you understand? I have no other course. I'm not fit to live in the world. At first I only saw one way, the other!"

The priest shook his head.

"Yes," she went on, "that's it. There's not much I believe in, but to avoid conscious baseness is one of the few essentials. To die was easy, simple, and pleasant, but base—base to throw down your cards when you don't like your hand, or, worse still, when you have misplayed it. Then I saw an honorable way. You would help me. In your church there is some place for everyone. Your people can take me, train me, use me; tell me what to do each day, never looking forward, never looking back. You can't refuse; in such a life I might even turn believer."

Before speaking the priest sadly studied her.

"Long, long have I prayed that you should be given to us, but it is not so that I would have you come, torn and bleeding, flinging yourself away in despair. My dear child, I greatly fear some grief, some—some—" He turned about for a word delicate and reverent enough to voice his meaning.

Virginia met his eye unflinching, and spoke in a metallic, level tone, utterly detached from any personal feeling:

"You think I'm crossed in love, that my mind may change. I'd better be quite explicit. You're right, but that is only part of it. My trouble must have begun far back in my wishing to be more sensible than other people, and reform the world and that sort of thing. I was a very elderly young person; human feelings and natural frivolity never disturbed me till I was fast tied to the way of life you have seen. All along I have been conscious of something wrong somewhere; then a series of events brought it out unmistakably. I ought to get married. Isn't that what you think?"

He nodded assent.

She looked at him with a smile of bitter amusement. "It's not so simple. The men who asked me wouldn't do at all—repulsion, that's the only word for the way they made me feel; then one came who is different, but he is impossible."

"But why? if you care?" he asked.

She resumed coolly, as if recounting the misadventure of some indifferent person: "He is twenty-two—if it were for a day or a year I could wish nothing better, but for life! Only think, Father, he is a child. How should he know what he wants? He pours out all he has, he's generous, but what would I be to take it? I'm old enough to know better. I'm responsible that he suffers from no such mis-mating."

"If you love each other, Virginia," said the priest solemnly, "love is a sacrament no human hand should trifle with."

"Love!"—she spoke crisply, artificially,—“I am not capable of it. I've grown crooked, ripened awry. What I feel for that boy isn't love. The craziest, most ephemeral love is touched with the breath of reality, it at least believes in itself, is convinced of its own durability. Now, what I feel for him is short-lived and I know it."

The priest looked at her with dawning comprehension.

"Don't you see?" she went on. "I'm disintegrated, my head's gone one way and my body another. A very carnal state, wouldn't you call it?"

"And you think this drives you from the world?" he asked.

"Sure of it," she continued, at first in the same controlled tone. "If you turn me off now, you make yourself responsible for whatever may come. I'm not fit,"—her voice warmed and quivered,—“I'd just strength enough to come to you for refuge. Otherwise—oh, in mercy don't leave me! Don't send me from this house alone. From here my path leads only to the river."

Father Tessaire's wise, tired eyes dwelt thoughtfully on Virginia, as with wild appeal she sprang to her feet and stood with parted lips, frantically scanning his face.

"Turn you off, abandon you, when you seek refuge! Surely the Church is only too glad to welcome such as you. Come, my daughter."

Motioning her to follow, he went out into the dark street where her cab still waited. A murmured direction to the driver, and side by side, without further speech, they drove quickly through the city.

## IX.

HER hand once taken from the rudder, it seemed as if the fatigue of years, of responsible thought, fairly overwhelmed Virginia. Even mentally she asked no questions when they stopped at a railway station,

passively watching while Father Tessaire dismissed the cab, bought tickets, and hurriedly sent a telephone message.

An hour's trip in a half-empty, ill-lighted train only sank her further in a trancelike indifference.

"Here is our place," said the priest; "yes, they've sent to meet you; I see the carriage."

Virginia would not have been surprised if a party of Little Sisters of the Poor had carried her off in one of the wagons of their order, but she was totally unprepared for a tall, white-haired lady, the quiet elegance of whose dress proclaimed her an unmistakable citizen of the world.

"Miss Dryden, this is Miss Rose Nancrede," Father Tessaire was saying.

The name started an elusive recollection, a story, a romance, something heard long ago; but what had this lady to do with her? Much, it seemed, for with a hasty word Father Tessaire had given her over into Miss Nancrede's charge and was saying good-night from the platform of a down train, whose noisy approach had drowned his last words.

"There is a wrap for you in the carriage, Miss Dryden," Miss Nancrede began in an old, sweet voice. She was far older than Virginia had gathered from a first glance at her spare, active figure. She was very polished, very gentle, and behaved as if nothing could be more natural and pleasant than Virginia's sudden inroad. Asking no questions, as they drove along she spoke of the lingering warm weather, of an apple-tree that had bloomed. All at once Virginia remembered the story which her brain had refused to produce,—Miss Nancrede's lifelong mourning of a young lover shot in the dim, tragic past.

They were driving up a long avenue at the end of which there showed vague outlines of a high-pillared country house.

"But," said the girl, "this is not where I am going, this is somebody's place!"

"Mine," answered Miss Nancrede. "Father Tessaire knows any friend of his is welcome, and just now I am all alone, and lonely too, my dear, as old women must be."

"But I can't, I can't——" Virginia began, aghast.

"Oh, yes," said the older lady, so kindly, so gently, "I'll ask no questions; you'll not be disturbed or have to see people. In a few days Father Tessaire will come. To-morrow my maid can bring your clothes, for to-night I'll provide you."

It was so simple and inevitable that Virginia yielded without remonstrance, gladly obeying her hostess's suggestion that she might wish to go at once to her room. This was a dignified, old-fashioned apartment, big enough to seem almost bare in spite of a quantity of heavy

mahogany furniture. Though feeling little hope of sleep, actual fatigue drove Virginia to bed, but before she had blown out her candle there was a light tap at the door, and Miss Nancrede came in carrying a glass of water and a medicine phial.

"You are too tired to sleep, I am afraid, Miss Dryden," she began, with a sympathy which reckoned only with symptoms, wisely ignoring cause. "These drops, do you mind? don't hesitate if you would rather not."

"Indeed, I am thankful," Virginia said eagerly, adding in explanation, "I've a little fever or something to-night."

The drops were potent and held Virginia till broad daylight plunged in a merciful sleep, from which she awoke in an unknown condition of mental inactivity. The day passed in walking in the garden, varied by reading aloud a newly published biography to Miss Nancrede. That night prickings of thought began to assert themselves, till by six o'clock in the morning bed was no longer tolerable. Slipping on some clothes, Virginia went quietly downstairs, meaning to walk in the garden till breakfast-time. To her surprise, on the stairs she met Miss Nancrede, apparently dressed for a drive.

"Is anyone ill?" the girl asked. "Has anything happened?"

"Oh, no!" said the old lady. "It is just a fancy of mine to hear Mass early every morning; the convent is only a mile away."

"May I go too?" asked Virginia.

Miss Nancrede hesitated a minute, then shook her head. "Not to-day. Do you mind much, dear? Father Tessaire wished you to be quite free from all influences till he saw you again. He comes this afternoon."

That day was very long. Bereft of occupation, no amount of self-control could keep Virginia from dwelling on the past. Whenever a bird chirped, whenever sweet autumn scents drifted in at the windows, she felt a pang there was no subduing. If Jack had offended her taste ever so slightly, if for a minute he had spoken off the key, if—well—if the angle of crisp brown hair on his temple were less good to the eye, she mightn't have longed so desperately for his presence. Her resolution was unchanged, but the details of carrying it out were lingering torture.

"Do you care to drive?" Miss Nancrede asked as they sat at lunch, neither woman making more than a pretence of doing justice to a daintily prepared meal.

A drive was one shade less intolerable than an afternoon alone in house or garden, and Virginia got into the Victoria half hoping, half dreading, the talk might take a personal turn, but Miss Nancrede spoke only of changes in the neighborhood, telling stories of bygone worthies, delicately pointed tales of an agreeably worldly flavor.

They drove through a narrow gateway, up a steep hill crowned by an ivy-covered church standing in a grove of cedars. The hillside was dotted with graves, some fresh, some overgrown with ivy and periwinkle.

Reaching a certain turn in the road the horses stopped of themselves, and Miss Nancrede asked, "Do you mind waiting where you are, Miss Dryden? I sha'n't be long."

Helping his mistress to alight, the footman produced a box from which the old lady took out a great sheaf of roses and mignonette. A few yards away she paused at a grave with a gray, lichen-covered stone, and laying the flowers on the soft turf she stood some time motionless.

When she again took her seat by Virginia's side the serene old face bore marks of recent tears.

"To-day is his birthday," she said; "he would have been seventy. It seems so strange; I can only think of him as brilliant and young, almost too young to be my son, now. You may think it absurd for an old woman to go on caring all these years, but there's more than grief for me, there's regret. After the first three months he got a few days' leave and came home, meaning to marry me at once. There was illness in my family; it seemed wise to wait. One may be too sensible, my dear. Well, I've had a lifetime to expiate my wisdom."

"I only wonder," said Virginia softly, reverently, "how you've borne it, missing something that was yours legitimately, without reserve. Did you never,—you are so devout,—did you never feel like just giving up and hiding away from the world, going into some order?"

Miss Nancrede shook her head. "Never, never for one minute. Repudiate him! cast his memory out of my life! take holy vows with my heart full of human love! besides, how can a woman give and take back? Out of the very pain I've learned, when once you care, even death can't quite come between." She stopped abruptly, and they drove home in unbroken silence.

At the door, remembering a message in the village, she went off, asking Virginia to make tea against her return.

Going slowly, meditatively into the pleasant drawing-room, Virginia came face to face with Jack.

For a minute there was only brutal physical shock; she hoped she might be dying.

"Well?" he asked.

At the sound of his voice her face turned irresistibly towards him, but what met her tragic eyes scattered Virginia's wits in dismayed conjecture. Instead of being angry, dejected, unshorn even, or careless, Jack was resplendent in aggressively new raiment. The carnation in his buttonhole spoke of careful selection; from his immaculate



shoes to his short-cropped, curly hair no dandy could be smarter, but the real surprise lay in his face.

Virginia felt as if she saw him for the first time. Not only was he handsomer than she had thought, but he had grown interesting, keen, capable of quick thought and quicker action. Statesmen looked like that, soldiers, people who did things. To complete her bewilderment, nothing could exceed his air of spirited cheerfulness.

"Come in," he said encouragingly. "Do you want to be kissed there, in the doorway, with that old butler looking?"

"I don't want to be kissed anywhere." This was hopelessly inadequate, and she knew it.

"All right, I can wait, but you have to come over here and sit down." With dancing eyes he came towards her. Virginia's breath failed, but he merely led her to a sofa well screened from view.

"Jack," she began desperately, "I don't understand."

"No need," he interrupted serenely, "I do."

"How did you get here?" She thought best to shift her line of inquiry.

"Play the game, Virginia," he rejoined gayly, "you don't ask questions. I am It, you run away. Just think! Once I was afraid of you, long ago, day before yesterday, there on the hillside. It's much better this way," he went on, actually putting his hands on her shoulders and giving her a little friendly shake, "and you such a perfect goose all the time. When your letter came I thought so,"—he drew back, folding his arms,—“but to make sure I asked your mother."

"Asked my mother!" Virginia echoed in dismay.

"Yes; then, of course, Father Tessaire let me know where to find you. He's a very sensible man—white"—Jack's tone was coolly judicial; he looked as if he wanted to kiss her, but had himself well in hand and meant to wait. "I asked Mrs. Dryden what you usually did when a man wanted you to marry him."

"She knows nothing about it," Virginia put in indignantly.

"Doesn't she?" Jack's tone was richly reminiscent of amusement. "All the same, she had quite a lot to tell: how you sent them off in short order; and she seemed to think that you were pretty fierce about it too."

"But that doesn't explain—" Virginia did not care to dwell on Mrs. Dryden's elucidations.

"I'll explain afterwards," said Jack, looking at his watch.

"Afterwards?" Virginia had not put as many questions in her whole past life.

Jack's eyes showed a relenting softness. "Yes, there'll be days and days like that one. We'll take a wedding-trip to-morrow and

lean on that fence-rail and look down over the valley," he went on briskly. "Judge Hawtrey is due here now, he is coming to marry us. Father Tessaire will come too." Going to the window he added, "The train must be late."

Virginia left her seat, and was cut to the quick at seeing Jack start from the window and place himself between her and the door.

"Oh," she exclaimed, "I wouldn't do that!"

"No? Well, you see, dear, I can't exactly trust you. You don't seem nearly as imposing as you once were. You look rather nice," he added teasingly, "but you've not the faintest notion how to behave, and as for me, you've perverted me entirely. It's a funny thing," he went on, apparently enjoying her amazed silence; "you used to be the oldest, and now you are way younger. Your methods have certainly made a man of me."

Virginia thought this quite true, since instead of debating what she should do with the boy, it now taxed every faculty merely to keep pace with the man. "Virginia," Jack pursued relentlessly, "we may as well have this out once for all. I thought you were some kind of goddess, up on a pedestal; you'd have been there still if you hadn't come off yourself. Now I see you're just a woman, not particularly sensible, not even very trustworthy, but you happen to be my woman." He was serious enough now.

"But," she gasped, "I've told you I don't want to marry you!"

"Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself! Look here, Virginia, there's no use beating about the bush. You care for me and you have shown it. If you are not woman enough to own up and take the consequences, I'm man enough to make you."

Not angry, but a little stern, he spoke in short, energetic sentences, with a force and confidence that gave Virginia strange tremors. Standing very erect, she faced him with white face and wide, frightened eyes.

"It's got to be the truth between us this time," he went on, drawing nearer, "if you care—I've the right"—suddenly he had caught her in his arms, his lips touched her ear. "Why did you run away? Answer me straight, Virginia!"

Why, indeed, since here, crushed ruthlessly in his arms, she thrilled with new sensations, sensations she seemed to have been waiting for all her life.

"Dare to say you're not mine!" His fierce whisper threatened her. "Why can't you send me off now? Why don't you hate this, my lips to yours, Virginia, to your eyes, to your hair——"

For all she knew hours might have passed, when a discreet cough from the neighborhood of the doorway drove Jack a yard away. On the threshold stood Judge Hawtrey, behind him Father Tessaire.

The Judge was a dapper little man, proud of his tact and very facetious. The obvious situation delighted him.

"Good-afternoon, Miss Dryden," he began sedately. "Under these somewhat unusual circumstances—I mean," he explained, "when we are summoned unexpectedly to perform the civil rite in a private house—it is customary to make inquiries—a—that no coercion is being employed. But—a—in this case, my dear young lady,"—archly,—“I think it hardly necessary to comply with this formality. Oh Miss Nancrede!” Benevolent, unfathomable, the old lady had glided into the room. "You are the other witness, I believe. Hardly necessary to ask if the lady consents," the Judge slowly reiterated, well pleased with his sentence.

"No!" said Jack abruptly, "we'll leave out no forms. Please ask her now, sir."

The Judge paused, a trifle disconcerted at Jack's suddenness.

Virginia looked from Jack to Miss Nancrede, sad under all her polished suavity, and back again at him, at his youth, his beauty, and the strength of his new manhood. All that was for her; the sweetness, the warmth of it, set the blood dancing in her veins. A passion for life, for happiness, for Jack, swept away every scruple.

"Please,"—her voice faltered, and for steadiness she laid a shaking hand on his firm young arm,—“please, when it's over, Father, can you give two heretics a blessing?”

"Just for luck, sir, do," said Jack, suddenly radiant.



## THE SCORN OF THE MAPLES

BY THOMAS WALSH

THE Maples whispered together,—  
 "He has scorned us all the year,  
 And now it is autumn weather,  
 Let us dazzle him if he appear."

And the Butterfly saw their splendor  
 And said,—“Gold and crimson you wear,  
 So come,—we are equals,—be tender,  
 For I never knew you so fair.”

But they answered,—“Summer is over,  
 And your vows are but tardy and cold;  
 Our hearts had the sun for a lover—  
 We will die with his kisses of gold.”

# AMERICAN HISTORY FROM GERMAN SOURCES

By *J. G. Rosengarten*

*Author of "The German Soldier in the Wars of the United States"*



THE recent publication in a German translation of Lowell's "Hessians" marks the change of German sentiment towards America. The translator, Major von Verschuier, formerly a member of the German General Staff, in his preface calls attention to the successive changes of opinion as to the hiring of the troops of one country for pay and service in another. Both Germany and Switzerland had done this very thing from early times, witness the Swiss Guard in France, the Papal Guard in Rome, the German troops in English service, in suppressing the Stuart rising in 1745, and in other parts of the British Empire. It was the outbreak of liberal ideals preceding the French Revolution, with its flood of new ideas, that first led to honest denunciation of the employment of German hirelings by England in America. Major von Verschuier pays tribute to the services of Frederick Kapp and Edward J. Lowell for their historical research and their collection for the first time in an orderly way of the facts relating to the German troops sent to this country by England. Whatever the crimes of their princes, officers and men did their duty, and undoubtedly Germany owes much of its rise in greatness, in its fierce struggle against Napoleon, to the lessons learned by its involuntary representatives who had served in America. To-day Major von Verschuier is heartily thanked by the leading German historical reviews for making Lowell's book known and accessible in translation to German readers, as throwing a new light on German history of the eighteenth century by its careful summary of the treaties by which the German princes hired their soldiers to Great Britain to prevent American independence. They were not only "Hessians," for Brunswick and Anspach and Bayreuth and Anhalt and Waldeck also sent their soldiers. Riedesel, the well-known General, whose wife's letters are among the most interesting productions of personal experience during our Revolutionary War, was a Brunswicker. The Hessians, however, came in larger number than any of the others, and their General, Knyphausen, as commander of the whole German force, naturally attracted attention to his division of

## 438 American History from German Sources

Hessians, and just as naturally "Hessian" was the name given to all the German soldiers serving in the British Army here. Frederick the Great spoke very contemptuously of his Hessian cousin for selling his soldiers to England, but then Frederick of Prussia was angry with Frederick of Hesse for refusing to sell him troops, so that his virtuous indignation was not without some personal resentment of his own.

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Brunswick sent five thousand seven hundred and twenty-three men, of whom three thousand and fifteen did not return home. Hesse Cassel sent sixteen thousand nine hundred and ninety-two, of whom six thousand five hundred did not return. Hesse Hanau sent two thousand four hundred and twenty-two, of whom nine hundred and eighty-one did not return. Anspach Bayreuth sent two thousand five hundred and fifty-three, of whom one thousand one hundred and seventy-eight did not return. Waldeck sent one thousand two hundred and twenty-five, of whom seven hundred and twenty did not return. Anhalt Zerbst sent one thousand one hundred and fifty-two, of whom one hundred and sixty-eight did not return. The whole number of these German soldiers sent to America from 1776 to 1782 reached a total of thirty thousand and sixty-seven, and of these twelve thousand five hundred and sixty-two did not return. The loss by death was seven thousand seven hundred and fifty-four, so that there was a balance of four thousand eight hundred and eight who remained in America and helped to swell the large accession of Germans in their new home. Undoubtedly too they, as well as the soldiers who returned home, helped to pave the way for the rapid increase of emigration from Germany to America, which was so marked a feature in the growth and development of the new nation, for Germany sent its representatives to every part of the United States.

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To-day Germany, from the Emperor down, takes pride in the good record made by the German soldiers in America, and Major von Verschuier is receiving high and well-deserved commendation for bringing out, in his translation of Lowell' "Hessians," the gallantry of German soldiers and officers in their long and arduous campaigns in America. The unfortunate result of the attack on Fort Mercer at Red Bank is particularly dwelt on as an example of German heroism, for Donop, who commanded the attacking force and fell at its head, had in vain asked the English General for more artillery, and, when it was refused with a sneer, went into action in obedience to orders which he knew must bring failure. Still it was a lesson of value in tactics, and it was learned in a way that did great honor to the Hessians for their blind obedience to commands, even wrong ones. The

Germans learned from the Americans the value of sharpshooters, and applied this lesson with profit in the reorganization of their own army in their long struggle to free their country from the tyranny of Napoleon. Naturally too the German staff in its collection of all the material for military history welcomes the addition of Verschuer's translation of Lowell's "Hessians," for it makes known to the studious German officer of to-day the results of research in German archives that have hitherto been a sealed book alike to German and foreign students. No doubt before long German thoroughness will be applied to a reproduction from these German records of many valuable contributions to our history in the reports, journals, diaries, and letters of German officers and soldiers who served in this country in the American War of Independence.

If the Germans have something to learn from an American author of their soldiers in America, we Americans have much to learn from the Germans. Their maps were admirable, and one recently reproduced in the number for April, 1902, of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History* was welcomed as a valuable addition to local history, for it gave the exact spot of several engagements in the operations around Whitemarsh that were nowhere so well recorded. Then too in the "Diaries" of Wiederhold and Popp, recently printed for the first time, the former in the *Americana Germanica*, the latter in the *Pennsylvania Magazine* for April, 1902, there are many facts of value and interest, the personal records of "our friends the enemy," through whose eyes we can now see very clearly what the other side looked at from their point of view. The recent revival of German interest in America is well attested in the timely publication of Verschuer's translation of Lowell's "Hessians" and in the attention paid to it by German journals.

The value and interest of Major von Verschuer's translation of Lowell's book may best be found in the fact that a second edition has been called for,—an honor not paid to the original, although it has for some years been appreciated by our own historical students. Perhaps when a new "historical novel" is constructed out of the material gathered in its pages (and we commend Madame von Riedesel as a heroine, with the two Newport ladies who married Hessian officers and lived and died in Germany) the "Hessians" may awaken interest enough in the American public to secure for Lowell's exhaustive researches the same interest here that has been shown at once in Germany, in historical and literary and military journals, in the translation which makes Lowell's name better known in Germany than in his own country. He died long before receiving this reward for his labors.

Edward J. Lowell, whose "Hessians in America" has been trans-

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lated into German, is the subject of a memoir by A. Lawrence Lowell in the "Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society for 1895" (Second Series, Vol. IX.). He was born in Boston in 1845, graduated at Harvard in 1867, collected material from the Archives in Germany, printing reports in the "Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society" and in the *New York Times* that afterwards supplied much of the material for his book. Later in 1892 he published a book, "The Eve of the French Revolution," which showed his thorough knowledge of that field of historical research. He died in 1894, leaving unfinished much material that he had gathered for further works. He was a contributor of valuable articles, mostly on historical subjects, to *Scribner's*, the *Atlantic*, and other periodicals. He was a careful student and a sound historian, and his book well deserves the unusual compliment of translation into German and publication in Germany.

"The Hessians and the other German Auxiliaries of Great Britain in the Revolutionary War," by Edward J. Lowell, New York, 1884, pp. 328, is the full title of the book that first and best gave the accurate details of the Hessians and other Germans who served under the British flag. This is the book that has recently been translated into German by Major von Verschuier, under the title of "Die Hessen nach dem Englischen von Edward J. Lowell, von O. C. Freiherrn von Verschuier, Major z. D. Brunswick and Leipsic: Verlag von Richard Sattler, 1901, pp. 250."

Another important source of contemporary information is in the Riedesel letters,—those of the wife of the General of the Brunswick troops serving here. With their children she was his companion in his campaigns and during his imprisonment after Burgoyne's surrender. The letters were first privately printed in Berlin in 1799, then in successive editions in Germany and in America, so that they are now easily accessible. "The Memoirs, Letters and Journals of General Riedesel," translated from the German of Von Eelking by William L. Stone, were published in Albany in 1868 by Munsell in two volumes.

The story of Madame Riedesel's letters is characteristic. Printed in Berlin in 1801,—an earlier edition was privately printed for the family only in 1799,—they were frequently reprinted in Germany, and in a very complete edition in 1881 by Mohr in Freiburg and Tübingen. These letters first became known to English readers through portions of them printed by General Wilkinson in his "Memoirs," and reprinted in Silliman's "Tour to Canada in 1819," Hartford, 1820, and in a second edition in 1824, and in full in 1827. Stone printed through Munsell of Albany his translation of the letters of Madame Riedesel in 1867, a much fuller and more satisfactory edition than that published in 1827 in Hartford.

"The German Allied Troops in the North American War of Inde-

pendence, 1776 to 1783," by Max von Eelking, translated and abridged from the bulky German original in two volumes published in Hanover in 1863, was published by Munsell in Albany in 1893. Von Eelking also published in Leipzig in 1854 the "Correspondence of General von Riedesel," and in 1856 his "Life and Writings of Riedesel" in three volumes, full of interest and importance for the light it throws on the details of the service of the Brunswick troops in their campaigns in America.



The recent revival of interest in the history of German settlers in America is attested by the succession of works published by the Pennsylvania German Society and by the Maryland German Historical Society. For many years the *German Pioneer* of Cincinnati contributed valuable material on the subject, and the veteran editor, Ratterman, is now preparing for the press a collection of the articles, mainly his own, but some by contributors such as Seidensticker, Schurz, and Kapp, which will undoubtedly prove a valuable addition to our slender stock of the literature of German-American history.



## THE LAND SAILOR

BY FRANK FARRINGTON

COME, fill my sails, you wastrel wind,  
And waft me o'er the fields,  
The golden fields, rich harvest lined  
With all that red earth yields.

Come, blow me down the valley way  
Between the crimson hills,  
Where hardwoods make the landscape gay  
And Nature's glad heart thrills.

Blow, blow my craft where yellow leaves  
Swirl vagrant through the air,  
And blow me where the rustling sheaves  
Dot fields of stubble bare,

For I would sail the autumn land  
While glow its radiant hues;  
With boat and breeze at my command,  
Down all its vales I'll cruise.



# “THE PRIMROSE WAY”

*By Marie Van Vorst*

*Author of “Philip Longstreth,” “Angels of the Perfection,” etc.*



AS he stood in the window of his office, drawn to his fullest height, Coverton appeared singularly in keeping with his surroundings. The room was massive, dignified, dark, and rather ugly. John Coverton was all of these.

He presented the expanse of his broad, flat back to the room set apart for him in the colossal building known as the publishing house of

MURGES & COMPANY,  
Bedford Street, Strand.

His clothes were well-fitting, rough, and dark. A man's appearance determines his type, his mould is cast when he first chooses his tailor. This gentleman's hands thrust in his sack-coat's pockets drew the garment forward, outlining his supple, well-developed torso.

The cigar he leisurely enjoyed filled the room with delicious aroma. He had smoked down to the crimson-and-gold label whereon it appeared that these Grazie Donne were made in Habana for John Coverton.

Dust, smoke, and stains of many rains draped the window before him. Through its not unsuggestive curtain of drifting fog were visible the shadows of the opposite houses, and windows that now and then peered out to see if Mr. Coverton were really still there! Why he had ever come or remained was a puzzle to the ancients of Bedford Street.

John Coverton was an alien, and had proved himself in the midst of tradition a very successful alien indeed!

Directly behind him his office-table groaned under the weight of books, papers, and extravagantly handsome writing materials. Whenever the sun penetrated the window-pane it found these objects of silver and glass, and luxuriated in reflections.

In the vast room, a cage, Murgess & Company had caged him, exempting him from the stirring crowd, from the jostling drove without, from entrance and exit, importunings and demands of clients, employés, contributors, and coördinaries of the publishing world. A goldmine guarded, a power-storage watched and protected, this was John Coverton. For one day the honorable house of Murgess & Company had gone down like a pack of cards. Before its good name passed

with its fame to utter extinction, a smiling Fate lifted a certain John Coverton aloft. Wisdom conceived that this enterprising Australian should put his genius and capital to the sinking wheel. Coverton had made three fortunes. "Whilst halting for breath between events, would he run a race for Murgess & Company?" This a delegation of astute gentlemen asked the rich man. They caught him one night at Clarige's en route for South Africa on his yacht. He told them he knew nothing of literature: "Ah, but he held the secret of financial success." He considered, between puffs of his cigar, consented, and lo, the house came up from ruin to brilliant success! Murgess & Company had "hitched their wagon to a star."

In Bedford Street he was regarded with reverence, won for him by his genius and success. Other qualities, personal, made him adored. When subjects of grave moment arose, a man in high position intruded upon the director; when a certain number of papers had accumulated demanding his signature, he was closeted with his secretary; during an hour each day he discussed with the collected members of the firm business details; otherwise he was left alone.

On this afternoon he regretted the etiquette protecting him from what excitement the world without his padded doors might offer. He decided that things in general were "Flat, stale" (but he could not accurately complete the tragic phrase, his bank balance wouldn't permit), "very profitable."

The padded doors pushed gently in, opened reverently on his seclusion. An oldish and charming gentleman, the editor of *Murgess' Monthly*, was the intruder.

"I beg a thousand pardons, Mr. Coverton."

"Not one, Harswater. Come in."

"I have a favor to ask."

"It is granted in advance."

(The great man's humor was warm as sun! Harswater beamed with delight.)

"Thanks! I want leave to introduce Miss Alicia Brookfield to you."

"You may introduce me to all the fields and brooks in your environment, Harswater."

The enchanted editor smiled. "Miss Brookfield is an American. She's here; just without; she'll explain her errand."

He withdrew to seek the importunate blue-stockings.

Even the near advent of a New England spinster, a scribbling Miss Quelque-chose, did not promise to enliven the dulness with which London on this day surrounded Coverton. To meet an American girl was not an expectation wholly rapturous. He had been meeting them, lately, at teas and races, in drawing-room and Park. They were, of

course, all beautiful and all rich (nearly as rich as Coverton), but they were on the chase for title-appendages. These the Australian could not add to his availabilities. There was a fresh, agreeable sound to the name as Harswater said it—"Alicia Brookfield." Indeed, it was familiar. Coverton had heard it lately, read it somewhere, on a page in the *Times*. For a second it connected itself to him with worldly news.

Here the door opened again and the lady appeared, followed by Harswater, who made a graceful presentation of the director to the girl and withdrew.

Miss Brookfield said, "I know just how unconventional this is, but may I speak with you for five minutes?"

And Coverton, with more warmth than he had seen fit to display in Mayfair or the Strand for an age, replied,—

"You may speak with me—five hours!"

This outblurting of his—a quasi gallantry—brought to the face of the girl a flood of color, hot, tempestuous. Coverton thought it a cruel fire to so burn lilies and white roses and neck of snow in its brutal, ruddy course.

"Please sit down, won't you?" He drew a chair near to the table.

"Five hours!" she repeated. "Oh, I am finding five minutes terrifying. I don't know how to say what I want to: Murges & Company have refused my novel!"

She had ignored the chair: he could not bear that she should stand and tremble before him. It was what she did, however. He could see how frightened she was by her dying blush, the tight clasping of her hands.

"Won't you please sit down, Miss Brookfield?" And she did: lost in the vast leather mountain, the huge masculine chair.

"Refused your novel?"

"You didn't know it?"

"No."

Nor did he smile at a naïveté which ignored how utterly such Liliputian nothings as novels refused, or accepted, were kept from him.

"I did not know it."

"'The Primrose Way.' Possibly they haven't even told you it was under consideration?"

"You are right."

"I ventured to offer it in London because hitherto the magazine has been hospitable to me. Murges & Company after keeping my story for several weeks refused it yesterday. I felt sure it was without Mr. Harswater's knowledge and yours. So it proves. He has not seen it, either."

The fact that she was before so much power, before the master of

her literary fate, frightened her. Her breath came flying; her breast seemed alive with birds that were beating their wings around her heart. She could scarcely see for a film of fear and excitement veiling her sight. Through the mist azure eyes, never meant to be so troubled, looked piteously at him. She had sought the director; the business mogul; the great John Covertton; the machine. The man she had not considered, as yet had not seen.

"This a novelist," he was saying, "this exquisite being." Cruelly, for the pleasure of hearing her speak and of silently observing her, he let her plead on.

"I can't tell you what it means to me to have my book thus summarily refused; I don't want to dwell on what it means to me!" She rose in her agitation. Crueller than the beating birds that gave evidence of their existence in her quick little sighs was Covertton himself, who did not stop her words.

"Unless Mr. Harswater or yourself tells me Murges & Company can't publish it, I shall not be content. I shall not feel that I have had my chance. They tell me you have brought this firm from ruin, that you have superbly carved your own career. I beg a chance—of you who know so well what 'chance' means."

Here, as she paused, her curtained vision cleared. She saw him distinctly. His brows' splendid arch—black, heavy; his strong features; his magnetic eyes—power was written on his face, ambition; these things she saw, acknowledged; and well for her plea that he was so late revealed, for she could never have spoke a further word. She saw more. He was looking at her, and it was not Alicia Brookfield, author of "The Primrose Way," he was so deeply considering—it was the woman. She ceased to speak.

"Do you like your book?" he asked shortly.

She was subtle. A moment before she would have replied with no difficulty, now she wanted to seize the manuscript and escape with it. Before she could answer further than by a gesture Covertton said,—

"I will take your novel."

Fear had left her with the dispersion of the mist of excitement. Already, true woman that she was, she saw the power was now in her hands.

"Oh, I can't accept that!" she said. "I didn't come to ask wholesale charity. I want Mr. Harswater or yourself to read it."

He smiled. "You have nothing whatever to do with it now." He touched a bell as he spoke.

He informed the gentleman who entered in response to his summons: "I have just bought Miss Brookfield's book. It is called 'The Primrose Way.' Will you take the author to your office, arrange for the publication, and pay her in advance whatever royalty she may name?"

Behind the two the padded door closed, slipped velvety into its casing. In the air lingered a faint, very delicate scent. Coverton decided it was primroses! On the table she had left her handkerchief. No idea of ringing and restoring it came to him. Suddenly grown pilferer, he pressed the ridiculously small, ridiculously fine morsel of linen frankly to his lips and slipped it into his pocket.

The night following Mr. Harswater was invited to dine with the director. With hors-d'œuvre Coverton asked his single guest, "What can you tell me of Miss Brookfield, the lovely American girl, your protégée?"

"Protégée only in a sense. I've always taken the stories she sends to *Murges' Magazine*—they're not bad!" he said indulgently and smiled. "But you have done more. I hear we are to publish a novel?"

Harswater's mood had come warm for topics to be broached with the soup and lingered over with walnuts and wine. A field of subjects tempted him to touch with his chief.

"What further, Harswater?"

"Oh, I know very little of her," he replied indifferently.

"She lives by her pen?"

Harswater searched his mind for some comprehensive fact with which to sum up and dismiss the salad subject of a girl writer.

"She lives abroad with relatives: she has claims upon her, I believe. A mother possibly, something of that order."

"Something of 'that order,' Harswater," smiled Coverton. "A father, then; he's a brute to let her lift a finger!"

"Invalid possibly," murmured the other, and smiled at the gentleman's kind interest.

"I see by the papers," he ventured confidentially, "that Baron Rontgen is to form an international publishing syndicate. What do you think of it?"

Coverton was drinking champagne; he put his glass down and said with too evident lack of interest:

"I think nothing of it. I refused the presidency."

Harswater jumped.

"Refused the presidency!"

The host nodded. "I am tired of this sort of thing." He turned his glass in his fingers, looked up brightly across the table to the older gentleman, and asked abruptly,—

"Have you read 'The Primrose Way'?"

Harswater couldn't remember ever to have heard of it.

"My dear man!—why, it's Miss Brookfield's novel!"

"Miss Brookfield?" (Fatality.) "Really, Mr. Coverton, I have not read it. There is, you know, so much to read through."

Coverton nodded and took him into a boyish confidence.

“Nor have I read it! The fact is, I didn’t dare to do so—I was afraid I should be disappointed. I intend it to be the success of the season, Harswater.”

He went to the play a night or two later, and there, in a box with people he knew, he saw Alicia Brookfield. He viewed her through his glass, decided that she was more positively “a beauty.” To judge by the admiration of the man beside her, Coverton’s opinion was not unshared. The sight of her with those people brought to his mind instantly where he had seen her name. It was in the *Times’s* list of the dinner-guests at Lady Bayne’s. He sought her as soon as he might. The common memory of an unusual meeting made a background for their renewed acquaintance piquant, humorous, intimate. Her timidity before him that afternoon had led him to think her very young; he had no regret in discovering she was more mature, more poised, far more woman of the world than he had dreamed.

In taking leave he said, “I am told—for I have asked—that you live in Paris.”

“Yes.”

“You are returning?”

“Soon.”

“I should like to see you again.”

“You will.”

“When may I come?”

“Aren’t we to be at Stoke-Poddington together? So I am told. Lady Bayne tells me we are on the same list?”

“I am delighted,” he said—“delighted.”

And at Stoke-Poddington he was all the more delighted in every hour that he could filch with her from golf and bridge and the fiddle-faddle with which fashionable boredom kills its leisure.

He had hitherto realized all his vulgar ambitions. Wealth, position, success, seemed to him vulgar, regarded alongside of his new ideal. But, spoiled creature of good fortune, Coverton was too secure in this beautiful possession. He toyed with his opportunity: in reality, he was dazzled by it, until, as though he played with light, it slipped through his fingers!

One morning as he came leisurely into the breakfast-room he was greeted by his hostess with the unwelcome news:

“Alicia, poor darling, has been telegraphed to go to her aunt, in Paris, post-haste. They’re always pulling her back by a string when she’s on the point of amusing herself.”

“Pulling her back?” frowned the director of Murgess. “Why doesn’t she break the thread?”

Lady Bayne, with the interest of a friend and the discretion of an enemy, took in all the breakfast table to Alicia's confidence.

"She's had no end of hard luck. She's been quite a dependant on her aunt for years, although lately she's been writing those clever little things for pin-money. Now just fancy, her aunt has lost every sou and Alicia hopes to recoup the fallen fortune of the family with 'The Primrose Way'!" She looked meaningly at the director of Murges & Company, who flushed and returned with warmth,—

"It's an awfully clever thing, Lady Bayne, and we are going to make it the success of the season in England and America."

Which was warm criticism from one who had not read a word of the manuscript, and a sound promise from a man whose will meant success.

But characteristics that had made Coverton,—Success,—for some caprice turned all against him in the phase of his life co-relative to a woman. He developed into that losing thing, Hesitation, when Agitation, if ever, was called for. He did not "take ship for France." He dallied. Gold had been molten in his hands; he gave his coin what face value his need called for; but love (if love this were) held him in its own mould.

He delighted himself in putting Miss Brookfield's book on the market in London and New York. No novel in this day of ephemeral successes was more ecstatically boomed, more sugar-coatedly forced down the Public Throat.

An enormous edition sold before the book appeared, and it went its selling course thousands by thousands strong. He delighted in the correspondence between Murges & Company and Miss Brookfield, and laid, one by one, the laurels of "The Primrose Way" before her, until they formed a green—nay, golden—luxuriance. He was blind to the skits, reviews, and scathing criticisms which daring critics flung; well-directed rockets, they cleared the blaze of glory of the book's financial success. Still it sold; for no sooner did Murges & Company feel the pulse of the market slack towards new orders than a fresh torpedo fell in the proper place, scattered noise for "The Primrose Way," and further editions disappeared like manna in the sun!

Thus seven months went skimming, and he contented himself with writing her agreeable letters, reading and re-reading her spirited, charming epistles that treated all that touched the friendship of Murges & Company with warmth, and all that touched "The Primrose Way"—per se—with gentle irony. "She values it for what it is: she is vastly superior to her book," he was glad to decide.

But in the spring Coverton, his private safe closed, his writing-table locked and sealed, he himself, with a certain sentiment, drew

the green curtain down before his dusty window. He turned away from financial problems and the curious windows of Bedford Street and went to France. One afternoon he presented himself at 47 Rue de l'Universite. The concierge stared brutally at the giant Anglo-Saxon.

"Mademoiselle Brookfield?"

"Mesdames Brookfield," corrected the woman significantly, "ces dames sont parties."

Mr. Coverton would wait.

"Mais non! definitely parties!" The woman would none of him. "Parties!" and she made a gesture so eliminating, so dispersing, that it might well have wiped the Brookfields from the earth's surface. She was cajoled by a lousis to reveal the banker's address, and with this cold substitute for his ardent anticipations Coverton was forced to depart. At — Rue Scribe results were more stupefying because final: the Brookfields had left for England the day before—the very day of Coverton's arrival! He obtained a London address,—a bank again,—none other was to be had.

After three days' absence from London, at Murgess & Company's he was convincingly informed that the fate of "The Primrose Way" had been definitely taken in hand by an irate public! "That Beast—the Public" (as a young writer has amiably styled the devouring creature), turned indignantly and pitilessly rent several worthless objects of diet, refusing to swallow further instalments of the like. Amongst rejected objects, whose real qualities had been too long cleverly disguised, was "The Primrose Way." Its editions now stocked the shelves of Murgess & Company.

Coverton listened to the information that closed with: "It's a drug on the market, sir. Give us authority to break up the plates!"

"Miss Brookfield, I understand, has gone to the Isle of Wight." (This he told his waiting minions over the top of the letter he had been perusing when disturbed to cast vote for the future of "The Primrose Way.") "I will communicate with her. You shall have my answer in a few days."

On Coverton's desk lay a manuscript addressed to him in a hand beloved and dear. It was a new novel, by Alicia Brookfield. Two hours must elapse before he could take the train to join his yacht en route for the Isle of Wight. Meantime he could not better pass his time than thus to read what these months had suggested to Miss Brookfield's mind and pen. . . .

It was late in the afternoon when he put aside the last sheet of the manuscript: he looked at his watch and rose. But Chance demanded no further flight of her shuttlecock! A card was brought the director. Miss Brookfield—would Mr. Coverton see her?



"Yes," he would see her.

She entered: the padded doors, closing behind her, shut out the world, and shut within all heaven.

The little gloved hand she sweetly extended with the grace of an old friend he held for an instant. As he murmured welcome he refrained with difficulty from expressing with frank daring his joy at sight of her. Indeed, over some such rhapsody as "She's mine! She shall be! She shall not leave me until she has given me sign,"—over such undertone he made his voice conventionally bid her good-afternoon, and tell her she was to be congratulated on her book's success.

"Oh, no praise, please! I have come to thank Murgess & Company and to deeply thank you."

"Then sit down by my table, where I have so often written you" (she colored), "where I have made out checks, sent you all sorts of literary encomiums and rewards."

"Oh, don't speak of it!" She frowned, and it pleased him to see no shade of vanity in her attitude.

"I thought you were on the Isle of Wight, Miss Brookfield?"

"I have just come from there."

Whatever the thousands of "The Primrose Way" had purchased, they had not been squandered on her apparel. He remarked its simplicity and its sombre indication. He ventured: "You are pale and look tired. Has this long time been to you nothing of good?"

She thanked his interest with her eyes—made no reply. "Murgess & Company—you and Murgess & Company"—she separated them prettily as though he were the house's divinity—"you have done me all the good in the world!"

"Oh, no, no!" he laughed; then disclaimed, more courteously than truly: "Your book"—again she forbade this perjury.

"Oh, do you think I don't really know what trash 'The Primrose Way' is?" (Her hand lay on the table beside the manuscript, her second novel.)

Coverton was silent; he did not dare be otherwise lest he should speak suddenly out all his love. He would not alarm this lovely being. He wished to woo her well. He felt a singular tenderness like to pity, knowing that surely she was to be caught up into the whirlwind of his passion's tempest. Silently he stood watching her.

"I have said that I came in to London to thank you. But it was not quite truthful of me—it at least wasn't all the truth! I need boldness to help me confess—it's to ask another favor!"

"You need no boldness to ask me a favor," said her publisher.

"I do indeed! Do you fancy I don't realize the sincere failure of 'The Primrose Way'?"

"Failure?"

"Dismal and dreadful. It's poor, pitiful stuff. And the horrible part is that I knew it when I came to you! Can you respect me, again?"

"Oh, please, respect you!"

(But she decided that it was the right word.)

"I needed money terribly, and I was ready to do anything to get it on the day I came. I want to be frank,"—she was adorable in her abandon,—"I want to absolve myself, but I do want to say that if it had been for myself, alone—believe me, I would never have come!"

"I am glad that the reason existed if it brought you," he said. "You are needlessly hypercritical with yourself. 'The Primrose Way' has coined us money, and you as well."

She smiled. "Yes, we have made the public our dupe! I can't say I am charmed with the morale of it. One day in Paris I really awoke to the intellectual shame: I determined to retrieve myself if I could." On a black ribbon at her belt hung a little black fan. She unfurled it and fanned her mantling cheeks. The gesture scattered on the air primroses again, their breath and fragrance. The challenge was too much for him.

He broke in: "I would like to say something. Please listen to me."

She furled her little fan and held it; her tone was quick and cold. "I see my manuscript on the table, Mr. Covert. Have you read it? It isn't so bad as 'The Primrose Way,' is it?"

He had risen and stood before her, and broke quickly in upon her words. "I don't want to talk of it, or of books or anything. What do they matter? I love you! I have been to France to tell you this; I was on my way to you now—when you came in. I speak badly, but I have an almighty plea. I can't hope for you to love me as I love you; but try to care—I will wait."

She had risen at his first word. A blanched horror overspread her face; it smote his soul like death. She moved her lips—no speech came.

He said, searching that pale face for some sign kind to him: "I have terrified you. I'm a brute! When a man feels like this it's his master. It's a tempest, a fearful whirlwind! I am daring to ask you to share it, then quell it. I've lived these months with one thought, that you will marry me. If I am mad, tell me now—I must know——"

She had stepped back, back, mechanically, until she stood behind the large chair. In the icy distance she imposed she listened, at least. It gave him courage.

"Let me give you everything, all the things you have so bravely foregone, are so beautifully made to possess. Let me show you every-

thing, take you everywhere." He drew near to her. "Alicia,"—he lingered on the name, as one who holds all his fortune in his palm. "Alicia," and he had all but taken her in his arms, when she stirred to life, gave a cry, and fled from him,—fairly ran across the room, cleaving the atmosphere with her slender, pretty figure. She took refuge in the window, stood there, her face from him.

The long look he had had of her distressing pallor—the wells of blue, in which his soul had been so heavenly steeped—told him that which no silence could deny, which no flight could gainsay. He felt he had the right and reason to swiftly cross the room to her—but both her hands were extended, and against him.

"Listen to me—listen to me—I am married." At his sudden halt, at the blank surprise, the dying of the light in his face, she gave a gasping cry, covered her face with her hands.

He repeated her words slowly: "You—are—married? When did you marry?"

"Last week."

"You are a bride then—this is your wedding-journey!"

She removed her hands from her face, the cruel blush that claimed her tyrannically when it came surging home, claimed her now.

"I suppose you would call me a bride. If this is my wedding-journey, I came on it alone."

The man before her had hitherto dominated every circumstance in his way. But what did that avail, since at the supremest desire of his life, at its absolute culmination, he was balked? He was struck in his glowing face by a brutal, insurmountable fact bounded in three words—"Married last week." His nature rose in revolt. He made an exclamation, went to her, and seized her hands.

"I don't believe it! It's false! It's impossible! You belong to me—to me!"

His personality seemed to cover her like a cloud. She murmured: "It is true. Will you let me go, please? I must go."

"No!" he forbade shortly and absolutely. But he released her hands. "You are here alone,—almost on your marriage-day. I wish to know what it means."

"I will tell you—then,"—she sighed,—“and if you look at me like that you will break my heart!” With the entrancing appeal her eyes brimmed over. Coverton—maddened—wheeled, went over to the table, and stood there.

For a few seconds she did not speak, struggled for control and words. Then he heard her desperately say:

"Oh, how shall I tell it? I have married my cousin. He's an invalid—he had no one but me: it is for him, to save his life, I wanted money. 'The Primrose Way' made it possible for us all to live. It

was to them—to my aunt and cousin—I went, you know, from Stoke-Poddington. A fortnight ago my aunt died—so, you see, he was alone, ill,—I married him.”

As if she feared her low voice, her halting phrases, might not reach the tall, rigid figure in its imposed distance, she came forward, little by little, until she was by his side.

Over his eyes were graven those signets of grief that are cruel for love to see. She repeated: “Last week—I married him last week.”

He turned. “Of course, this man loves you?”

She bowed her head. “He has always loved me.”

Coverton exclaimed, “It’s a barbarous, horrid sacrifice—I can’t grasp it.” Without he heard the passing of feet near his door; the interview, already long, might be now interrupted.

“I can’t ask you—now,”—she succeeded in forcing to her lips a ghostly smile,—“I can’t ask you the favor I came for.”

“Why?”

She was silent.

“Why?” (He knew his tone of bitterness and jealousy must cut her.) “Because I adore you? You are in need again! You are wanting money? ‘The Primrose Way’ has been selling abominably lately. I’ve been away; they’ve been lax. They shall get out at once an edition de luxe, and it shall be dramatized. I will attend to it.”

She caught her breath—he watched her struggle with herself. “As for your new novel, it’s a masterpiece. ‘The Primrose Way’ has brought you fortune—this shall bring you fame.”

“Oh,” she gasped, “you think so, you mean it?”

“It is full of beauty and of a——” He silenced the words of endearment that rose to his lips. “When do you leave London?”

“To-morrow.”

“You will let me come and see you to-night where you are stopping.”

“No—no.”

“You must,”—his voice was hot in his throat—“I beg it, I ask it—demand it. You speak of gratitude! See”—he tried to smile, to make of light consequence his most vital desire—“see how far I am pushed to stoop to remind you! I do remind you! You won’t refuse me a few poor moments with you, who have given your life to another man out of pity.”

“You must not come.”

He drew close to her again. The ghostly sounds without his door maddened him. “Why, why have you done this thing?—condemned yourself to live without love?”

Whether in pity for herself or him, she returned his look fully and then said, “I do not live without it.”

As she said the words, and he fully understood them, he knew there was nothing in their hearts to keep them apart. The immortal distaff had originally unwound these kindred threads that they should run side by side to mate finally, become a single strand at last. What ruthless severing should then be pardoned? What mitigation against the eternal intent be endured? Wherein, if not here, should man master destiny? Thus he blindly excused the determination with which he possessed himself of her hands.

"The man you have married has no right to you—none other than your humane service. Dreadful as it is, it might be worse for us both. I love you—and you love me." He waited the tenth of a second for a denial he knew would not come. Then, with a triumph she could but pardon, he said, "You love me," and drew her to him.

"Help me!"—he heard her whisper it. "Help me!"

"I will," murmured the man—"help you to live,—and to love."

Holding her face from him, thus turning her body too, she said breathlessly: "Never in this way. You have been all my good, will you be my evil?"

Her face awed him. Her helplessness called to something higher than his passion and egotism. With a swift gesture she drew her hands from his and held them against her breast, exclaiming:

"You see what I am! Weak and wicked—I appeal to you to help me!"

"You ask a miracle."

"Oh, you have wrought many—you have helped me to soften pain, to ease the life of someone utterly bereft of everything save myself."

"Spare me those details."

Gaining strength and reason, now that she had freed herself from his touch, she said: "I cannot—I must not spare either you or me. He is my husband. Chained to his chair, he sits by the window waiting to see me return."

The cruel question, "How long?—for how long are this man's days numbered?" rose in Coverton's mind. He crushed it out.

"I must go back to him, my head high, my heart clean."

She trembled,—tears on her lashes' fringe, her breast tempestuous under her loosely clasped hands.

"I may write you?" he asked. "I may know what your life is? I may help you—live?"

She threw out her hands in the abandon of desperation. "If you write me, it will mean that you will come; if you come, I cannot live my life well."

Before it was too late she threw upon him all the burden, all the responsibility, of their salvation. He set his face hard, grew pale, and his eyes dark as caves under his heavy brows.

God knows for what response the woman's nature sincerely prayed—whether to be swept up in flame to the ultimate paradise or to be helped to renounce.

He said slowly: "I will do whatever you say, in this moment, but you must go, and at once. The house will write to-day to you regarding your novel. It shall be published immediately. Where may they send you a line—to-night?"

She was half way between the table and the door and stood mutely. He did not move from his position by the table; his hand rested on her manuscript.

She said, "But you will not write me?"

"If you wish me not to do so."

"Then I shall be at Clarige's."

Her silence asked for a further promise. But no answer fell from his lips. He forebore to look at her—an enormous concession—and with his silence in response to hers, she withdrew.

But there was nothing in this very determined man to ape renunciation, which if it develops the spirit to angelic stature, dwarfs the flesh. On his way uptown his destination was acknowledged—Clarige's. As though a very knowing fiend had preceded him and prepared the way, within ten minutes of the hotel Coverton, passing a florist's, saw primroses filling a wicker basket. White-leaved, pink-tinged, they suggested the coloring of the fairest face he knew. He bought every primrose in the shop,—ordered them, wicker basket and all, put into a box, took the offering himself, and went bravely to the hotel.

The rich and celebrated are spared many chagrins of mediocrity. Coverton was known at the office; a clerk came forward as though he expected the Australian—indeed, the visitor was prevented from realizing that he did not know the name of the woman he had come to see!

"Mrs. Manners left this for you, Mr. Coverton." From a pigeon-hole behind him the clerk took a letter and handed it to the gentleman who stood with a florist's box beneath his arm.

"She left it? you mean?—"

"She's just gone to the Isle of Wight, sir; has not been gone fifteen minutes."

He sought a quiet part of the smoking-room, put the box of primroses down on the table. His letter was yet unopened; he turned it, musing. She had known, then, that he would come, and in order to put every barrier between them she had flown! Her subtlety in thus comprehending him, in confessing her own weakness, made her more charming than ever, made him more deeply tender to her.

Determined to seek her from world's end to end; to melt all obsta-

cles as ice before burning-glass; to make for them both, despite man and fate, a Primrose Way! he opened the letter.

"They have sent for me. My husband is dying. If I arrive too late, I shall never forgive myself—or you—as long as I live."

He could not, after intensest scrutiny, discover whether tears, or a pen's mark, or a blot, had defaced the words—"or you." But they were defaced!—so obscure, indeed, that only an excited vision keen as was his at this moment could have read them through the blur.



## ENCHANTMENT

BY MADISON CAWEIN

WITH fall on fall, from wood to wood,  
The brook pours mossy music down—  
Or is it, in the solitude,  
The murmur of a Faerie town?

Some town of Elfland filled with bells,  
Or holiday of hurrying feet;  
Or traffic now whose small sound swells,  
Now sinks from busy street to street?

And oft its folk I recognize  
In wingéd things that hover round,  
Who for men's eyes assume disguise  
When on some fairy errand bound.

The bee, that haunts the touch-me-not,  
Big-bodied, making braggart din,  
Is elfin brother to that sot,  
Jack Falstaff, of the Boar's Head Inn.

The dragonfly, whose wings of black  
Are mantle for his garb of green,  
In Ancient to this other Jack,  
Another Pistol, long and lean.

The butterfly, in royal tints,  
Is Hal, mad Hal, in cloth of gold,  
Who passes these as once that Prince  
Passed his companions boon of old.

# THE HOME GREENHOUSE

SUGGESTIONS FOR BUILDING AND RUNNING IT

*By Eben E. Rexford*

*Author of "Home Floriculture"*



TO grow flowers to perfection, in the winter, one must have better facilities than those afforded by the windows of the living-room. While it is true that many kinds may be grown comparatively well there, it is also true that many very desirable kinds cannot be grown there at all, and those with which we attain a fair degree of success are never grown in anything like perfection. One has only to go from the window-garden to a greenhouse to find proof of this assertion. The plants grown by the florist, who can control heat and light and moisture, resemble the plants in the window-garden only in general features, though investigation may show that they are identical as to variety. But the florist's plants will have a vigor of leaf and flower that those in the window-garden seldom attain to.

The wide difference in appearance does not come from better care, as some suppose, but from more favorable conditions. As a general thing, the owner of a window-garden lavishes more care upon her plants than the professional florist does on his. She has to do this in order to secure even a moderate degree of success. Half that care expended on plants grown in quarters more favorable to healthy plant-development would enable her to grow plants quite as well as the professional. How she would like to do that! She has tried her best to make her plants equal those she has seen at flower-shows and florists' exhibitions, but her efforts have always fallen far short of the success she aimed at. By and by, after years of repeated effort, she has come to the conclusion that it is impossible to grow such plants as she would like to in the sitting-room windows, and she feels that she must be content with inferior specimens. This is always a source of keen regret with the person who grows flowers from a love of them, and who, because of that love, would delight in seeing them reach that perfection which she knows plants can be brought to under right conditions. She is right in her conclusion as to the impossibility of achieving anything but mediocre success with plants in a room where the atmosphere has very little, if any, moisture in it, and where the temperature is away up in the nineties at one time, and down danger-



ously near the freezing-point a few hours later. Here the red spider and the aphid will flourish and do their best—or their worst—to complete the work begun by moistureless air and a temperature which goes to extremes, combined with lack of sufficient light. Only when one has a place made expressly for plants, where all the conditions of heat, moisture, and light are under control, can a satisfactory measure of success in their culture be attained.

The idea prevails that a greenhouse is, and must be, an expensive luxury. That it is a luxury we admit, but it is not an expensive one, neither is it one of those luxuries which come under the head of foolish extravagances on which money is, to all intents and purposes, thrown away. Flowers are like books and pictures and music to those who love and understand them. They do much in refining and uplifting and developing our better natures, and soon become as much necessities, if we give them a chance, as the books and music cultivated people cannot well get along without. They should be classed among the necessary luxuries of life.

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The primary idea of a greenhouse is simply a building or room where summer can be kept prisoner over winter. It need not be elaborate in any sense. The plainest structure that is built sufficiently snug to keep heat in and cold out, and affords free entrance to light and sunshine, will grow plants just as well as the most ornate building, —better, perhaps, for many greenhouses defeat some of the objects aimed at in their construction by excess of ornament, which interferes with light and ease of management. I know of one amateur's greenhouse which is really nothing more than a shed whose board roof has been removed and one of glass substituted, but this plain little building has in it plants which would do credit to the most elaborate conservatory equipped with every modern convenience. The owner of this cheap building picked up here and there some of the material from which he constructed it, buying it as he could afford to do so, and storing it away until he had enough to warrant him in beginning his house. He built it himself, working "between-whiles." It is not ornamental from without, but those who go into it forget all about the building in their admiration for the beautiful plants it contains. You could not make its owner believe that the money that went into the house could have been invested in any other way that would have "paid" half so well. No dividends of dollars and cents have been declared on his investment, but he has realized as much pleasure from it as, I presume, his millions have ever afforded Andrew Carnegie.

◆

The home greenhouse can be built as cheaply as any other part of the dwelling, and with as little trouble, if the person who has super-

vision of the job understands what it is necessary to do. Before beginning the work a plan should be prepared, and this should be gone over with the carpenter and care taken to see that he understands it in all its details. This is important. If the builder does not fully understand the work he is to undertake, and you cannot clearly explain it to him, let him visit some greenhouse and get ideas from it to help him out.

In making your plans, consider, first of all, the location of the building. Sunshine must be secured in order to make a success of plant-growing, and your building must have a location where it will not be much shaded by other buildings. If it is on the south side of the house, and can have sunshine from early morning until two or three o'clock, it will not matter if there are buildings to the west of it which shut off the later sunshine. The sunshine needed most is that of the forenoon and mid-day. A house which only gets the benefit of sunshine up to noon will enable one to grow such plants as begonias, fuchsias, ferns, palms, and many others well, but geraniums, heliotropes, and others fond of a great deal of sunshine will need more than a short forenoon affords. A western exposure is not satisfactory because of the intense heat which characterizes afternoon sunshine. All things considered, an even-span house—which means a house having a roof of equal size on each side—running north and south will be most satisfactory, but a “lean-to” sloping to the south or south-east will answer almost as well.

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It has been customary among professional florists to construct a frame by setting posts in the ground, precisely as fence-posts are set, and boarding these up to form the side-walls of the greenhouse. In boarding them matched lumber is used, outside and in, with sheathing paper between each thickness of boards. A very good wall is secured in this way, but it is never as “true” as it ought to be, because of the difficulties of getting the posts strictly in line. Nor is it as lasting in its character as it ought to be for a greenhouse attached to the dwelling. This part of the house ought to be built as solidly and substantially as any other portion of it, because, once built, and built well, it is good for a long term of years, while a cheaply built affair will soon begin to go to pieces. It pays to build the greenhouse on a foundation of stone let into the ground deep enough to go below the frost-line. If this is done, there will be no heaving, with consequent loss of glass and other annoyances resulting from unstable foundation. Posts soon begin to rot below the soil, and this is the beginning of the end with a house built on such a framework. But a house built on a stone wall is never subject to decay, except from internal moisture, and that

can be largely avoided if plenty of paint is used. Erect your frame on the wall precisely as you would the frame of any other part of the house, subject, of course, to the modifications of your plan.

I might outline a plan here, but as the conditions vary so greatly under which small home greenhouses are likely to be built, I hardly think it advisable to do so. I would simply say, have as little wood-work about the house as possible. The side and end walls, to the height of three feet from the ground, may be boarded up outside and in, but above that height by all means have sash. In other words, let all that part of the house above this three feet of boarded wall be composed of glass as far as possible. Of course, there will have to be studding to support the roof and to fasten the sash-frames to, but no boarding anywhere above this wall. A little study of the plan on which modern greenhouses are built will enable any carpenter to get the idea more clearly than I can put it into words. The principal things to keep in mind are these: To so construct the house that the least possible obstruction will be afforded against the entrance of light, and to make it so snug that there are no cracks and crevices through which sharp winds and frost can gain admission. In making the roof, be sure to use the light sash-bar now so popular. Heavy rafters, which are no longer used, cost much more than these bars, interfere greatly with the admission of sunshine, and add nothing to the strength of the roof. If sash-bars ten to twelve feet long are given the support of one one-inch pipe, running lengthwise of the house, no other support will be needed by the roof. This pipe should, of course, rest on upright piping set about eight feet apart, to prevent it from sagging under the weight of the glass of the roof. Nowadays the frame-work of the best greenhouses is composed largely of iron piping which fits together with screw joints. This gives a rigid but light and airy-looking frame, and one that offers but little resistance to the entrance of light. The up-to-date carpenter will be able to apply the suggestions made to the house he builds in such a manner as to make it effective and satisfactory without the expenditure of a large amount of money.



Decide the size of the house you want, and then let him draw plans for it and make an estimate of probable cost. First-quality lumber will not be required for boarding if sheathing-paper is used liberally, as it should be, for it is a most efficient protection against cold. I would advise boarding up the walls, outside and in, with cheap lumber, then covering it with two thicknesses of paper. I would finish the inside wall with matched ceiling-lumber, running up and down, that the grooves may assist in carrying off water instead of retaining it, as they would if the boards ran lengthwise. Outside, I would finish the

walls with what is called "ship-lap." This makes a snug joint which will not open if the lumber shrinks, and affords ample security against the admission of rain and wind. The air-space between the outer and inner boarding is a most efficient non-conductor of cold. By the exercise of a little extra care in the construction of such a wall it may be made practically air-tight. There is economy in building well, in the long run, for a snug house saves fuel.

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If the sides of the house are five feet high—and that is a good height for them—and the three lower feet of the wall are boarded as advised, there will be left a space of about two feet for sash. This sash should be hung by hinges to the plate, so that it can be swung outward for ventilation. There should also be sections on each side of the roof so arranged that they can be opened for ventilation. There are ventilating appliances now on the market which so add to the ease of management and control of the greenhouse that no one can afford to be without them. By simply turning a crank attached to a rod and connected with a wheel and a set of arms fastened to the sash of the ventilators in the roof, those sections are opened to suit the need of time or season, and a reverse turn of the wheel closes them. The lifting-arms are so connected with the rod that they are held rigidly in any position where you see fit to leave them, consequently there is no possible danger of accident from sudden winds. A similar apparatus makes it an easy matter to open the side ventilators by simply turning a crank. The sash-bars advised for the roof are so constructed that when they are fastened in place, at ridge and eave, it is an easy matter to put the glass where it belongs, and a cap which fits snugly over the shoulder of the bar and fastens by screws holds it firmly in place without brad, tack, or putty. This is a vast improvement over the old method of glazing the roof, and makes it easy to replace broken glass. The glass for the roof, let me remark right here, ought always to be what is known as "double-strength." Very severe hailstorms will not injure it, but roofs glazed with single-strength glass are not strong enough to withstand the effects of a slight storm.

◆

How to heat a greenhouse is one of the problems which the builder often finds perplexing. Shall he use steam, or hot water, or furnace heat, or depend on oil-stoves, or warmth from the adjoining rooms? If the building is a very small one and it is well made, an oil-stove may be sufficient to furnish all the heat needed in ordinary weather, and a second stove could be held in reserve for very cold spells. If the building happens to be attached to the dwelling and there are wide

openings between it and the living-room, enough heat will generally be admitted to keep out frost. But it is not safe to depend on such a method of heating unless the plant-room is very small indeed. Furnace-heat can be supplied from the cellar or basement if the dwelling is heated in that manner, but I consider this the poorest of all heat for a greenhouse. Steam-heat is perhaps cheaper than any other for large houses, but the ideal heat for small ones is that furnished by hot water. If the dwelling is heated by this system, it is a comparatively easy matter to extend the piping to the greenhouse. If there is no way of supplying heat from the house-system, and the greenhouse is sixteen by twenty feet or larger, I would advise the use of one of the small hot-water heaters made for this particular purpose by several firms who deal in greenhouse supplies. These small heaters cost about as much as a parlor coal-stove, are self-feeding, and can be left to take care of themselves at night. They can be depended on to furnish a sufficient amount of heat for the coldest weather if properly regulated. If this system of heat is decided on,—and, as I have said, it is an ideal one,—correspondence with the manufacturers of these heaters will enable you to determine the size of the heater needed to perfectly warm your house in the coldest weather. Simply tell them the size of it and the amount of glass on roof, sides, and end. If you submit a rough diagram showing size and location, they will willingly furnish you with a plan for piping it without charge. The house heated by hot water can be kept at almost any desired degree of temperature by the adjustment of the drafts of the heater. An even, summer-like heat is furnished in which all kinds of plants flourish. Hot-water heat is preferable to steam for small houses because of its economy. In the use of steam it is necessary to raise the water to a certain temperature before any heat is given off in the pipes upon which the greenhouse depends for warmth; in other words, the water must boil before there is any heat in the pipes. To keep up circulation, the fire must be kept burning briskly. Let it die down, and your heat-supply is cut off.



But with hot-water heating circulation begins in the pipes as soon as the water becomes warm, and it continues as long as there is any fire. It will readily be seen, therefore, that for mild weather hot-water heating is far superior to steam-heating, while all that one has to do to obtain heat enough from it to meet the demands of cold weather is to open the drafts and bring about more energetic combustion. The management of a hot-water heater is so simple that a child can soon learn to operate it.

Quite satisfactory substitutes for a real greenhouse can be made by enclosing verandas with glass, if they open off the living-room in such

a manner that warmth can be admitted readily to them. If there is only a window or a door between them, I would advise cutting away enough of the wall to make the opening several times larger than that afforded by the removal of these. Glazed doors can be fitted to the opening or curtains can be hung there. Doors which enable you to shut your plants away from the living-room when it seems desirable to do so are preferable to hangings, as they make it possible for you to use water so freely on your plants that the air about them can be kept moister than you would care to have it in the living-room, and that is precisely what they like. Of course, it is not possible to grow the variety of plants in such a room that can be grown in a real greenhouse, but the conditions can be made so much more favorable to healthy plant-growth there than they can ever be in the living-room that one's chances of success with a wide range of plants are greatly increased. Such a plant-room, while in every way vastly inferior to a greenhouse, will be found so great an improvement on the ordinary window-garden that money is well invested in making it.

◆

The home greenhouse, though small in size, enables us to grow decorative plants to a size that makes them extremely useful in room-decoration. The woman who has some good-sized palms, ficuses, grevilleas, aspidistras, and other plants of that class is never at the mercy of the weather or the florist in preparing her rooms for the reception of visitors. The material needed is at hand, and she takes great pride in it because it is her own. Old plants seem like members of the family, and with a greenhouse for them to develop in they seldom outgrow their quarters. Such is not the case with plants growing in the living-room. By the time they begin to be most enjoyable they are too large for the windows, and we have to discard them and begin again with small ones. The list of plants that can be grown in the greenhouse is a long one, while the list of those which can be grown successfully in the living-room is a very limited one and includes but few of the plants we care most for.

◆

If you decide on building a greenhouse, do not make the mistake of having it too small. If you have had only a few plants in the window, a room twelve or fourteen feet square will seem large enough to you to hold all the plants you will ever care to grow. But I venture the prediction that you will wish in a short time that the room was as large again. When we have conveniences for growing all kinds of plants our collections increase rapidly. We seldom go away from home without finding new plants to bring back with us. The cost of a house

sixteen by twenty or twenty-four feet is not a great deal more than that of one twelve by sixteen or thereabouts. The smallest size of hot-water heaters is easily equal to the task of heating the sixteen by twenty-four house, and the extra amount of coal used in doing it costs but little.

If possible, have the greenhouse attached to the living-room or the dining-room in such a manner that the beauty in it is at all times enjoyable by the family. It should be easily accessible, that one may get into the habit of spending the "odd minutes" there, for there will be always work to do among the flowers. And delightful work it is—pleasant work, restful work—work that you will never tire of.



## PEYRE DE RUER TO HIS RIVALS

BY MILDRED I. MCNEAL

**A** LONG season's flowers, your trifles, your songs—  
 Add too, if you dare,  
 A jewel to beckon and shine like a star  
 In the night of her hair:

All these and all else that will make for delight  
 Lay down at her feet,  
 And dream you are pleasing her—giving, we know,  
 To the lover is sweet.

But how fast and how far you have run past the use  
 Of our old, surer thrift!  
 What maiden has ever loved lover more dearly  
 For sake of his gift?

Or opened to any the innermost secret  
 And sweetness of hers,  
 Save to him with the secret that mates it—most wise  
 Of her worshippers!

And here it is mine, and I care not, you rivals,  
 What smiling she spares,  
 For the roses she takes with my love from my hand  
 Are the roses she wears.

# DR. MARSH'S FORTUNATE CALL

*By Josiah Allen's Wife*

*Author of "My Opinion and Betsy Bobbett's," "Samantha at Saratoga," etc.*



**I**F there ever wuz a girl in the world no kin to me that I loved it wuz Marion Martin. She lived nigh enough so I knew her hull history from A to Z, specially Z. It wuzn't the beauty of her face, nor her sweet disposition, though they wuz attractive, but it wuz her real self, the beauty and patience and duty of her hull life, that made up her charm to me.

Her Ma died when she wuz fourteen, leavin' two twins, just of a age, three singles, and a Pa with a weak, tottlin' backbone that had to be propped up by somebody the hull time, and when Miss Martin laid down the job Marion took it up. She wuz real sweet-lookin', her eyes wuz soft as soft brown velvet and her hair about the same color, only with a sort of a golden light on it when the sun shone on it, a clear white-and-pink complexion, a good, plump little figger, always dressed in a neat, quiet way, and pretty manners, so gentle and lovely that I always felt when I see her like startin' up that old him:

"Sister, thou art mild and lovely,  
Gentle as a summer breeze,"

but didn't always, knowin' it would make talk. But I had noticed that she begun to look kinder wan and peaked. I knowed that she had a lover, a good-actin' and lookin' chap that I liked first rate myself. He had been payin' attention to her for over two years, and I wondered if the skein of true love that had seemed to run so smooth from the reel of life had got a snarl in it; I mistrusted it had, but wouldn't say anything to force her confidence, thinkin' that if she wanted me to know about it she had the use of her tongue and had always confided in me from the time she used to show me her doll's broken legs and arms with tears.

Marion wuz well-educated and always the most helpful little thing about the house. She wuz one of the wimmen who would make a barn look homelike, a good cook, a real little household fairy, and Laurence Marsh had always seemed to fully appreciate these qualities



in her. Her Pa wuz well to do, so Marion had enough to do with, but the care of the family had all come on her, her Pa, the two twins and three singles, makin' quite a burden for her soft little shoulders to bear. But she seemed to be strengthened for it some way. I guess the Lord helped her. She had jined the church when she wuz fourteen and wuz a Christian, everybody knew. She kep' the house in perfect order with the help of one stout German girl, makin' mistakes at first but gittin' the better of 'em as time went on, takin' the best of care of the baby girls, kept an eye on the three unruly boys, keepin' 'em to home nights jest by lovin' 'em and makin' home a pleasanter place than they could find anywhere else, injected courage and hope into her Pa's feeble will in jest the same way by her love and cheerful, patient ways.

She studied music chiefly so the boys could have someone to play for 'em,—they had good voices and loved to sing,—studied all the health books and books of household science so she could take the right care of her babies and her home, improved every year, so that now when she wuz nineteen I told Josiah that Marion Martin wuz jest as perfect as human bein's can be. You know folks can't be quite perfect or else they would flop their wings and fly upwards. And oh, how Marion loved her baby girls, two plump, curly-haired little cherubs, and how they loved her, and how her Pa and the boys leaned on her. And I could see, if nobody else could, how her heart wuz sot onto Dr. Laurence Marsh, and I didn't blame her, for he wuz as fine a young chap as there wuz in the country. He wuzn't dependent on his profession; he had plenty of money of his own that fell onto him from his Ma. And he'd paid her so much attention that I s'posed that he would offer her his heart and hand, though I thought mebbly he wuz held back by the thought of how necessary she wuz in her own home. But it had come to me, and come straight,—Elam Parsones widder told it to Deacon Bissels' aunt and she told Betsy Bobbett's stepdaughter and she told Tirzah Ann and she told me; it come straight,—that Marion's Pa had been seen over to Loontown three different times to the Widder Lummisses, and I thought to myself that the Lord had planned to lead Marion out of the kinder stuny path of Duty into the rosy, love-lit path of Happiness, and I felt well over it.

But who can know anything for certain in this oncertain world? One day when I had just been congratulating myself while I washed my breakfast dishes about the apparently happy future waitin' my favorite (Miss Bobbett had been in to borry some tea and told me she see the Widder Lummis in the store the day before buyin' a hull piece of Lonsdale cambric. And I can put two and two together as well as the best. So I wuz washin' away with a real warm glow of happiness—my dishwater wuz pretty hot, but that wuzn't it entirely), Josiah

come in and said he wuz goin' right to Marion's on bizness and I could ride over and stay there whilst he wuz gone. He wanted to start right away, but we wuz belated by the harness breakin' after we got started, so it wuz after the middle of the forenoon when we got there.

Marion wuz dretful glad to see me and visey versey, yes indeed! it wuz versey on my part, but I thought she looked wan, wanner than I had ever seen her look. The hired girl had gone home on a visit, and her Pa had took the boys and two little girls out ridin', so Marion wuz alone. And as I looked round and see the perfect order and beauty of her home, and my nose took in the odor of the good dinner started early, so's to be done good (it wuz a stuffed fowl she wuz roastin' and cookin' some vegetables that needed slow cookin'), and as I looked at her, a perfect picture, with her satin brown hair, her pretty blue print dress with white collar and cuffs and white apron with a rose stuck in her belt, I thought to myself the man that gits you will git a prize. But I wuz roused from my admirin' thoughts after I had been there a little while by Marion sayin' in a pensive way,—

"Do you think I could write poetry, Aunt Samantha?"

"Poetry?" sez I. "I d'no whether you could or not." But as I looked round ag'in I sez mildly, "Mebby you couldn't write it, Marion, but you could live it, and you do now, in my opinion."

"Live poetry!" sez she wonderin'ly.

"Yes," sez I, "livin' poetry is full as beautiful and necessary as to write it, and a good deal more of a rarity."

I knew her hull life had run along better and smoother than any blank verse I had ever see, better than any Eppicac or Owed; it had been a full, sweet, harmonious poem of love and order and duty. But she sez ag'in sadly:

"I can't live poetry; I can only do common things. I can't read Greek, or write poems, or carve statues, or paint beautiful pictures."

Her sweet eyes looked mournful. I wanted to chirk her up. So I sez, as my nose ag'in took in a whiff of the delicious food, "Folks can worry along for quite a spell without knowing Greek, when they can understand and do justice to a good, well-cooked meal of vittles." And sez I as my eye roamed round the clean, sweet interior, "There is such a thing as livin' a beautiful picture, and molding immortal statutes" (I meant the dear, good-actin' little twins), "and in my idee you've done it, and I know somebody else that thinks so too."

"Oh, no, he don't! he don't!" And suddenly she knelt down by my side and almost buried her pretty head in my shoulder and busted into tears. And so it all come out, for all the world tellin' me about it jest as she did when the sawdust flowed from her doll's legs.

It seemed that Laurence Marsh had been away to a relative's visit-

ing, and went to some charity doin's and had there met a young widder visitin' in the place, a poetess and artist and sculptor; she read a Greek poem dressed in Greek costume, and some of her pictures and statuettes wuz on sale. He got introduced to her. She made the world and all of him, and I see how it wuz,—men are weak and easy flattered and don't know when they're well off,—the bright, pure star that had lit his life so long didn't seem so valuable and shinin' as the dashing glitter of this newly discovered meteor (Metafor). The Widder had writ to him and he had writ to her, and his talk since then had been full of her, and I see how it wuz, he wuz kinder waverin' back and forth, though I mistrusted, and as good as told Marion so, that his love for her wuz as firm as ever, it wuz only his fancy that had been touched.

Well, if you'll believe it, that very afternoon after I got home who should come in but Laurence Marsh,—he brought some legal papers he had been fixin' for Josiah,—and I treated him quite cool, about as cool as spring water, I should judge, for I didn't like the idee of his usin' Marion as he had, though of course he wuzn't engaged to her and had a right to pick and choose. And for all the world if he didn't go to work and confide in me. It beats all how folks do open their hearts to me; I s'poze it is my uncommon good looks that makes 'em, and my noble mean, mebbby, and if you'll believe it, and though I hadn't no idee I should, I did feel kinder sorry for him before he got through. He appreciated Marion, I see, to the very extent of appreciation, but his fancy had been touched, the romance in his nater had responded to Miss Piddockses romance.

"Miss Piddock?" sez I, "she that wuz Evangeline Allen?"

"Her name is Evangeline; so suited to her," sez he.

"A widder with three children?" sez I.

"Yes, three beautiful little cherubs; I love them already from their mother's description."

"Why," sez I, "Miss Piddock is related to Josiah on his own side, and we've been layin' out to go and see her, but sunthin' has hendered. She lived out West and has only moved back a year or so ago. We've writ back and forth; and Josiah and I got it all planned to stop and see her on our way to the Conference," sez I. "I too have been greatly took with her writings." His handsome face grew earnest, he has perfect confidence in me, and sez he:

"I can trust you. After you have been there will you tell me what you think of her? Will you?" And sez he, "I feel that you will love her, adore her; for if she is so lovely away among strangers what a jewel she will be in the precious setting of her own beautiful home. She has described it to me, and I have loved Nestle Down just from her description."

I sez coolly, "Josiah and I hain't goin' to be sent out like spies to discover the land; why don't you go yourself?"

"She don't want me to visit her," sez he, "she is so sensitive, so delicate; she has some reason I do not understand, and my duties to the hospital tie me here until my vacation, which seems an age. But my life's happiness depends on my decision," sez he.

Well, I didn't give no promises nor refuse 'em. What made me more lenitent to Laurence Marsh wuz that I too had such feelin's of deep respect for Evangeline Piddock, I too had read with a beatin' heart some of her poems on the beauty and sacredness of home and domestic happiness, her glorification of Mother Love and Duty, and at a relative's I had seen some of her pictures and statuettes in stun, beautiful as a dream,—she wuz truly a disciple of Art and Beauty and a Creator. And then—I heard his ardent words, I see the light in his eyes. And oh, the joys and pains and the dreams of youth, the raptures and the agonies! I could look back and feel 'em ag'in in memory. The impatience with Destiny, the hopes, the oncertainty, the roads that branch off in so many different ways before the hasty, impatient feet. Setting at rest at even-tide in the long, cool shadows, don't let us forget the blazing skies, the heart-beats, the ardent hopes, the ambitions, the perplexing cares of the forenoon.

Well, if you'll believe it, the very next Sunday after that Marion's Pa married the Widder Lummis, stood up after meetin' and married her in a good, sensible, middle-aged way, and brung her home, and Josiah and I wuz invited there the next week a visitin'. We're highly thought on in Jonesville.

I found Marion's step-Ma quite a good-lookin' woman, full of animal sperits and dressed handsome; she seemed good enough to Marion on the outside, but I could see that home wuzn't what it had been to Marion in any way; her new Ma wanted to go ahead and be mistress, and thought she had a right to, and she didn't keep the house as Marion did; things wuzn't dirty, but if the house resembled any poem at all it wuz a poem of Disorder and Tumult. She wanted the boys and the two twins to like her, and she humored 'em, gin 'em candy and indigestible stuff that Marion never approved of, but they did highly, and they seemed kinder weaned from Marion and took up with their good-natered, indulgent new Ma. And of course Marion's Pa, as wuz nateral, wuz all engrossed in his new wife; she wuz healthy, handsome, and a good cook. Poor Marion! in the new anthem they wuz all jinin' in there didn't seem to be any part for her voice. She looked like a mournin' dove; my heart ached for her.

Towards night I see her leanin' up ag'inst the west winder of the parlor lookin' out sadly, and though the settin' sun wuz on her face, it couldn't lighten the shadder on it. I went up to her and laid my

hand on her shoulder, and I see then that her eyes had been fixed on the pretty cottage Doctor Marsh had jest bought, the prettiest place in Jonesville, a sort of stun-gray house settin' back in its green trees with a big lawn like velvet in front, all dotted with flowering shrubs and handsome trees. But I never let on that I knew what she wuz lookin' at. But I sez as I laid my hand tenderly on her shoulder,—

“Dear, I am goin’ to the Conference to-morrow, so I sha’n’t see you ag’in for some time, as we’re goin’ to make a few visits on the way.”

She lifted her big, sad eyes to mine; they wuz full of tears and she didn’t need to say a word. Her tragedy wuz writ there,—the loss of everything she had loved and held nearest in her life; she didn’t need to speak, I read it all, it wuz coarse print to me, I didn’t need specs. And she read what she see in my eyes, the deep love and sympathy I wouldn’t profane by puttin’ into words. No, I jest bent down and kissed her and she me, and havin’ passed the compliments with the new Miss Martin we went home, and the next day we started for the Conference.

Well, as we approached Pennell Hill, the abode of Evangeline Allen Piddock, I looked anxiously at myself and pardner and picked off some specks of lint from his coat-collar and my mantilly and anxiously smoothed the creases out of my umbrell and tried to fold it up closter and more genteel, but I could not, it would bag. But I felt a or in approachin’ her home, for I had studied her writings a sight and almost worshipped ’em, and through them the writer, you know sunthin’ as it reads “up through Nater to Nater’s God.” So I had looked up through her glorious poems of Love and Home and Beauty, her divine pictures and statutes, up to the author, and my soul had knelt to her, and thinkses I, I am now on the eve of enterin’ a home more perfect and beautiful than my eyes have ever beheld, presided over by a perfect angel. Of course, I didn’t s’poze she had wings or a halo, knowin’ a woman couldn’t git round sweepin’ and dustin’ worth a cent with white feather wings, and knowin’ the halo would more’n as likely as not drop off when she wuz smoothin’ rugs or pickin’ posies to ornament her mantletry-piece, but I expected to see a woman perfected as I had never seen her before in every way. And I not only paid attention to the outside of our two frames, but I tried to pick out the very finest soul garment I had by me, to clothe my sperit in, knowin’ then that it wuz hardly worthy of her.

But my meditations wuz broke in on about a mild from Pennell Hill by seein’ a strange-lookin’ group of children ahead on us; they wuz barefooted and clad in ragged, dirty garments, and their faces and hands and feet wuz as near to Nature’s heart as dirt could make ’em.

Their manners too wuz sassy, and grotesque in the extreme, for when we stopped and I asked 'em politely if they could tell me where Miss Evangeline Allen Piddock lived the oldest one sung out:

"What do you want with her? You can't see her anyway, she's abed!"

"No," sez another of 'em, "she won't look at you, you're too homely." And still another of 'em stuck a grimy forefinger on the side of a smudgy nose and sez, "What are you givin' us!" And then all three on 'em yelled out, "Rubber neck! Rubber neck!"—some sort of a slang word, I s'poze,—and then they kicked up their dirty heels and run and jumped over a fence, and one boy turned two or three summersets, while the other ones kicked at us. Worse-lookin' children I never beheld, nor worse-actin' ones, not in my hull durin' life; I felt stirred up and mad clear to my bones as they disappeared over a hill. And I sez to Josiah,—

"I should think that the ennoblin' influence of Evangeline Allen Piddock would have elevated even neighborin' children and kep' 'em from bein' perfect savages like these."

And Josiah sez, "I'd love to try the ennoblin' influence of a good birch gad on 'em," and I didn't blame him, not a mite. Anon we approached a shamblin', run-down lookin' place, the house with the paint all off in spots and the picket fence dilapidated, the pickets and rails hangin' loose, and weeds runnin' loose over the yard, and Josiah sez, "We might inquire here where Evangeline lives."

I sez, "She wouldn't have anything to do with folks that lived in such a lookin' place, but it wouldn't do any hurt to inquire."

So Josiah approached the rickety piazza and carefully stepped up on the broken doorstep and rapped, the door-bell hangin' down broke. He rapped ag'in and yet ag'in, and the third time the door wuz opened and a female appeared clad in a long, flowing robe of sage green and her kinder yellow hair hangin' loose, only banded back in a Greek sort of a way with a dirty ribbin, and the robe wuz dirty and two or three holes in it.

Sez Josiah, "Can you tell me, mom, where she that wuz Evangeline Allen lives, Miss Piddock that now is?"

And then the female struck a sort of a graceful attitude and sez, "I am Evangeline Allen Piddock."

You could have knocked me down with a hair-pin, and my poor Josiah wuz also struck almost sensible, and sez he, "Well, we've come." And the female looked down on him, still holdin' that graceful attitude. But I broke the dead-lock which ensued by callin' out from the democrat, I wuz only a little ways off,—

"Miss Piddock, let me introduce Josiah to you."

She come forward eagerly and sez with effusion, "Is this Cousin

Josiah Allen?" and she shook his hands warmly. "And is this my dear Cousin Samantha?" sez she, approachin' the vehicle and holdin' my hand in both of hern. "Descend from your equipage!" sez she. "Welcome, dear cousins, to Nestle Down!"

"Thank you, Evangeline," sez I, as I slowly backed out of the democrat and alighted down. But my soul wildly questioned me, Where, where shall we nestle down? For I couldn't see any place. And after we got our things off and wuz visitin' my soul still kep' up this questionin', When, when shall I nestle down? and where? For the outside of the house wuzn't a circumstance to the inside; everything that could be out of place wuz, and everything that could be dirty lived up to its full privileges in that respect. The hired girl, a shiftless creeter, I could see, wuz sick with nooraligy, but appeared with a mussy, faded-out calico wrapper and a yeller flannel tied round her face, and inquired what she should git for supper. Evangeline wuz at that moment describing to me a picture she had in her mind to paint, but she left off and gin the girl some orders, and then kep' on with her talk.

She sez, "My mind revels in the heroic, the romantic, it spreads its wings and flies away from the Present and the Real into the Beautiful, the Ideal."

And I thought to myself, I didn't blame the soul for wantin' to git away somewhere, but knew that it ort to be right there up and a doin' sunthin' to make matters different.

Well, after a long interval we wuz called out to the supper-table. There wuz a crumpled, soiled table-cloth hangin' onevenly on a broken-legged table propped up by a book on one side. I looked at the book, and I see that it wuz "The Search for the Beautiful," and I knowed that it never could find it there. Some showy, decorated dishes, nicked and cracked, held our repast,—thick slices of heavy, indigestible bread; some cake fallen as flat as Babylon (you know the him states, "Babylon is fallen, fallen, fallen, Babylon is fallen to rise no more"); some dyspeptic lookin', watery potatoes and cold, livid slices of tough beef; some canned berries that had worked, the only stiddy workers, I judged, that had been round; some tea made with luke-warm water. Such wuz our fare, enlivened by the presence of three of the worst-actin' and worst-lookin' children I ever see in my life, clamberin', disputin', sassy little demons, reachin' acrost the table for everything they wanted, sassin' their Ma and makin' up faces at us sarahuptishusly, but I ketched 'em at it. The girl with the nooraligy waited on the table; her dress hadn't been changed, but a mussy lookin' muslin cap wuz perched on top of the yeller flannel, and a equally crumpled, soiled, white muslin apron surmounted her dress, but style bein' maintained by these two objects, Evangeline seemed to be content.

She wuz the only serene, happy one at the table, and she led the conversation upward into fields of Poesy with a fine disregard to her surroundin's that wuz wonderful in the extreme. Her talk wuz beautiful and inspirin', and in spite of myself I found myself anon or oftener led up some distance into happier spears of fancy and imagination. But a howl from some of the little demons would bring me down ag'in, and a look at my dear pardner's face of agony would plunge me too into gloom. Eat he could not; I myself—such is woman's heroism and self-sacrifice, and feelin' that I must make up for his arrear-ages—eat more than wuz for my good, which I paid for dearly afterwards, and knowed I must; dyspepsia claimed me for its victim and I suffered turribly, but of this more anon and bime-by.

After supper we returned into the parlor, the children, with variegated faces and hands caused by berry juice and butter, swarmin' over us and everything in the room, so I see plain the reason that every single thing wuz nasty and broken in the house and outside. They wuz uncomfortable as they could be, every one on 'em had the stomach ache; and why shouldn't they? the acid in their veins made 'em demoniac in their ways. Not one mouthful had they eat that wuz proper for children to eat, nor for anyone else unless their stomach wuz made of iron or gutty-perchy. And I didn't believe that they ever took a bath unless they fell into the water, which they often did; the girl had gin their hands and face a hasty wipe with a wet towel, and their hair, which wuz shingled, wuz as frowsy and onclean as shingles would admit of.

Evangeline wuz good-natered, and she had the faculty, Heaven knows how she could exercise it, of bein' perfectly oblivious to her surroundin's, and soarin' up to the pure heavens, whilst her body wuz down in a state worse than savages. Yes, so I calmly admitted to myself, for savages roamed the free, wild forest, and clean spots could be found amongst the wild green woods, but here in vain you would seek for one. Her pictures and statutes were beautiful and she had piles on 'em, some done, some only just begun; she wuz workin' now on a statute of Sikey, beautiful as a poem in marble could be, and as we wuz lookin' at it she sez, liftin' her large, fine eyes heavenward,—

“Oh, to create, to be a creator of beauty in poem or picture or statute, it seems to make one a partner with the Deity.”

“Yes,” sez I, “there is a good deal of sense in that, and I fully appreciate beauty wherever I see it.”

But bein' gored by Duty, sez I, “How would it work to make your own children, of which you are the author, works of art and beauty, care for them, work at them some as you do at your own stun figgers, cuttin' off the rough edges, prunin' and cuttin' so the soul will show through the human, and they havin' the advantage over your statutes



that the good work you expend on them is liable to go on to the end of time, carryin' out your lofty ideals in other lives—how would it work, Evangeline, and makin' your own home as nigh as you can like the ideal one you dote on—wouldn't it be better for you?"

She said it wouldn't work at all; the care of home and children hampered her and held her down; she preferred pure, unadulterated art, onmingled with duties.

But I sez, "Wouldn't the time to decide that question been before you volunteered to assume these cares; but after you have done so, how would it work to do the very best you could with them, finish the work you've begun in as artistic and perfect a way as you could?"

I was cautious, I didn't come out as I wanted to, so I sez, "How would it work?"

But she sez ag'in, "It wouldn't work at all." Sez she, "To describe the beauty of home and love and child life in marble and poem and picture, she had to be severed entirely from all low and ignoble cares."

"Low and ignoble!" sez I, for that kinder madded me. Sez I, "No work a woman can do is more noble and elevatin' than to make a beautiful home where lovely children rise up to call her blessed. Such a work is copyin' below as nigh as mortals can the work divine; for isn't Heaven depicted as our everlastin' home, and God the Father as lovin' and carin' for His children with everlastin' love, countin' the hairs of their head even, He takes such clost care of 'em?"

"He don't order us to be shingled either," spoke up Josiah. "He don't begretch the work of countin' our hair."

I wunk at him to be calm, for oh, how cross his axent wuz, but knowin' that famine wuz the cause on't I didn't contend, but resoomed:

"See how our Father beautifies and ornaments our home, Evangeline, with the glories of spring and summer, fills it with the perfume of flowers, the song of birds, hangs above us His dark blue mantilly studded with stars, and from the least little mosses in hid-away nooks up to the everlastin' march of the planets, every single thing is perfect and in order. His tireless care and love never ceases, but surrounds us every moment in the home He makes and keeps up for us below," sez I. "If a woman prefers to keep aloof from the cares and responsibilities of wifehood and parenthood, let her do so, but havin' assumed 'em, let her realize their duty and dignity, for," sez I, "to create a true home, Evangeline, is worthy of all a woman's efforts, and in such a cause even brooms and dish-cloths take on a sacred meaning."

But she said that mops and dish-cloths and such things wuz fetters that she could not brook. And at that moment the three little imps all fell into the room demandin' with shrieks and kicks sunthin' or rather that their Ma couldn't pay any attention to, as she wuz absorbed in

contemplating a slight thickness in a minute part of the butterfly's wing on Sikey's shoulder, and her mind wuz all took up in thinkin' how could she prune it off without destroying the wing, it wuz so fragile and yet so highly necessary to be done. So havin' howled round her a spell and tugged at her Greek robe, so I see plain how the dirt and rents come on it, they hailed the passin' figger of the hired girl in the hall and precipitated themselves onto her, havin' previously kicked at the panels of the door so it almost parted asunder, so I could see plain how in a year's time everything wuz in ruins outside and inside Nestle Down, and how impracticable it wuz that any ordinary person could by any possibility ever nestle down there, but Josiah here broke in ag'in,—

"Evangeline, how long did your husband live?"

Sez she, liftin' a torn lace handkerchief to her eyes, and leanin' up ag'inst one of her statutes a good deal as I've seen Grief in a monument in a mournin' piece, "He lingered along for years, but he wuz sick all the time, he had acute dyspepsia."

"I thought so," said Josiah, "I most knowed it!"

Ag'in I wunk at him to keep still, but his arms wuz folded over his empty stomach with a expression of agony on him, and he answered my sithe with a deep groan, and knowin' that I had better remove him to once, I proposed that we should retire. But Evangeline wuz describing a most magnificent sunset which she intended to immortalize in a poem, and in spite of the gripin' in my stomach, which had begun fearful, I couldn't help bein' carried away some distance by her eloquent language.

Well, at my second or third request, we retired and went to bed. Our room wuz a big, empty-lookin' one. The girl havin' lately started to clean it, but prevented by nooraligy, the carpet-nails hadn't been took out only on two sides, and the children had been playin' under it, I judged by the humps and hummocks under it. Josiah drewed out from under it a sled, an old boot-jack, and a Noah's ark that he had stubbed his foot ag'inst, and I tripped and most fell over a basket-ball and a cokay mallet. The wash-stand had been used by 'em, I thought, for headquarters for the enemy, for some stuns wuz piled up on it, a broken old hammer, a leather-covered ball, and some marbles.

The lamp hadn't been washed for weeks I judged by the mournin' chimbly and gummed-up wick, and there wuz mebbly a spunful of kerseen in the dirty bottom of the lamp. The bed wuz awful; the children had used it also as a receptacle for different things. We drawed out of it a old sponge, a dead rat, crumbs of bread and butter, and a pair of old shoes.

The girl who showed us up said the children had played there all the day before, it bein' rainy, but she guessed we would find everything

all right. Not a mite of water in the broken-nosed pitcher, not a particle of soap, but an old apple-core reposed in the dirty soap-dish.

Well, I fixed things as well as I could, and we pulled the soiled, torn lace coverlet over us and sought the repose of sleep, but in vain. Awful pains in my stomach attested to the voyalation of Nature's laws. Josiah, wore out and groanin' to the last, fell asleep, for which I was thankful. The oil burnt out to once, leavin' a souvenir of smoke to add to the vile collection of smells, so I lay there in the dark amidst the musty odors and suffered, suffered dretfully in body and sperit.

Amidst the gripin' of the colic I compared this home to the home Marion had composed like a rare poem of beauty, and I methought how much more desirable is real, practical duty and beauty than the gauzy fabric wrought of imagination, or 'tennyrate how necessary it wuz not to choose two masters. If one loved Art well enough to wed it and leave father and mother for its sake, well and good, but after choosin' love and home and children, how necessary and beautiful it wuz to tend to them first of all, and then pay devotion to Art afterwards.

Well, I couldn't allegore much, I wuz in too much pain, dyspepsia laid holt of me turribly. But amidst its twinges, I remember wishin' that Laurence Marsh could compare as I had the two homes and lives composed by Marion and Evangeline.

And then a worse twinge of pain brung this thought, a doctor I ought to have. A woman should be allowed to choose her own doctor. I said to myself, I will send for Dr. Laurence Marsh in the mornin', which I did. Josiah, bein' skairt, telephoned to him to come to once. He come on the cars, arrivin' at about ten A.M.

I guess I had better hang up a curtain between the reader and Laurence Marsh as he stood in that home confronted by Evangeline Allen Piddock and her household. I hadn't told her who I had sent for, not havin' seen her that mornin', so he see 'em all in a state of nater as it were.

Yes, I will hold up a thick heavy curtain with Josiah's help, for I don't want the reader to see Laurence Marshes face as he looked about him in the parlor and up by my bedside—such a bedside! His face, as he measured out my medicine, wuz, as Mr. Byron sez, "A scroll on which unutterable thoughts was traced." But amidst all his perturbations of mind, and wrecks of airy castles and dreams, nothin' could prevent him from bein' a good doctor, though owin' to a urgent hurry, a case of life and death as it were, he said, he had to return to Jonesville immediatly, which he did.

But I felt so much better after takin' the tablets twice every half hour that we resoomed our journey at a little after 'leven A.M., stoppin' at a good tavern for dinner about a mild from there, and went on to

the Conference, which we attended that evenin' and the next forenoon, stoppin' to a cousin's on my own side for a night on our way back, reachin' home the fourth day of our absence.

It seemed to me that home never seemed so good, so dear, and so clean to me in my hull life before, and what added to my perfect enjoyment, jest as we set down to a delicious supper, cooked by my own hands, one of the singles brought over a note to me from Marion. It wuz a invitation to her weddin', which wuz to take place the next week.



## THE TAVERN

BY ETHEL WATTS MUMFORD

THE Tavern is bright and warm and gay,  
And the travellers laugh as they sit at play;  
Priest and courtesan, lady and lord,  
Crowd together the gaming-board;  
Jester and judge see the red wine brim—  
Outside the roads are far and dim!

The Tavern talk is loud and high,  
Honors and jealousies, minstrelsy,  
Politics, pleasure, and, loud above,  
The dominant note is a cry for love;  
Yet each to his neighbor a mystery still—  
Dark is the night across the sill!

Each comes alone to the Tavern old,  
Some in tatters and some in gold;  
Each goes hence on his lonely way,  
'Reft of his rags or his doublet gay;  
Each steps alone on the wide threshold—  
Outside the night is black and cold!

Life greets the guests at the Tavern door;  
Death speeds them forth to return no more;  
With the stirrup-cup that all must drain,  
The last dark brew of tears and pain,  
Death touches his lips to the bitter rim—  
Outside the roads are far and dim!

# BY COACH THROUGH SOUTH AFRICA

*By J. W. Davies*



A VERY few days after the expiration of the forty-eight hours allowed by the Boer ultimatum of October 9, 1899, Rhodesia was completely cut off from all direct communication with the south. What this meant to the inhabitants, and the discomforts and difficulties which at once arose in consequence, it is difficult for anyone unacquainted with South Africa to realize. Although the railway to Bulawayo has been open only a few years, the town was in a great measure dependent on it; the breaking of the railway meant that no fresh provisions at all, no meat, fruit, or vegetables, reached Bulawayo during the first months of the war.

The town itself was only founded, as everyone will remember, after the Matabele War of 1893. It was built as nearly as possible where the old capital of Matabeleland had been, the new Government House being actually erected on the site of Lobengula's Kraal. The reasons for this choice seem to have been purely sentimental, as it is easier to enumerate the disadvantages of the position than to find its merits. Water is scarce, and there are no trees; owing, apparently, to the ravages of white ants none will grow. The red dust which is one of the plagues of South Africa is seen to great perfection here; and, although it is in the centre of a great mining district, there are no gold-mines in the immediate neighborhood of the town. Taking these things into consideration, the wonderful growth of Bulawayo is the more astonishing. In the few years of its existence there has not been time to overcome all the natural disadvantages. Large and substantial houses have been built, as well as hotels, a club, theatre, hospitals, and churches, all in the grandest South African style, of red brick with iron roofs; suburbs of pretty little houses, of a more or less permanent character, stretch for some two miles round the town. All this has grown up in seven years, and the growth has been especially rapid since the railway connected the place with Cape Town. North of Bulawayo the progress has been different. Two hundred and eighty-five miles separate it from Salisbury, the capital of Rhodesia, a town of comparative antiquity, being no less than thirteen years old, yet much less advanced in many ways than its more modern rival.

The chief mode of communication between Bulawayo and Salisbury is by coach, and the principal business of the coach service until of late was to carry on the mails, which arrived at Bulawayo by train. All heavy goods travel the same road by ox-wagon, and families going out to the various mining centres in every direction from Bulawayo commonly use the same means of transport. The quickest and most comfortable way of getting from place to place is by private cart and mules. A Cape cart with six or eight mules completes the journey from Bulawayo to Salisbury in about ten days,—provided it is not the rainy season. But a very small percentage of the travellers who visited Bulawayo from the south ever penetrated as far as Salisbury.

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I arrived in South Africa with a friend just a month before the outbreak of actual hostilities. After landing at Cape Town and visiting Bloemfontein, Pretoria, and Johannesburg, we reached Natal forty-eight hours before the railway communication was stopped by the Boers, and there we remained during the early stages of the war. We ultimately decided to go on to Rhodesia by the only route then possible,—namely, by steamer to Delagoa Bay and Beira and thence onward by rail. This sounds a very simple plan, but the execution was by no means so easy. In Natal we could get no information whatever about the Beira railway, despite our diligent inquiries; no one knew whether there was any connection between trains and steamers, or how often the trains ran; moreover, no one could give any idea of how long it took to reach Salisbury from Beira—a distance of three hundred and ninety-eight miles by the railway before the recent alterations, which have shortened the distance by a few miles; and we could not hear, and no guide-book could tell us, of any place at which it was possible to halt on the road, except Umtala. Our astonishment at this ignorance was lessened after we had ourselves performed the journey both to and from Rhodesia.

At that time the trains were advertised to run once a week, but the day depended on the arrival of the mails, and the speed of the journey depended greatly on the weather. The curves in part of the old line were difficult, and the train not infrequently came off the rails. Some friends of ours suffered this harrowing experience fifteen times in one journey; but such contretemps did not seem, as a rule, to affect the passengers otherwise than as a vexatious delay. It often happens in the rainy season—the middle of summer, from November to February—that large pieces of line are altogether washed away. We experienced this on our return journey. There was a heavy thunderstorm at night, and soon after starting in the morning we came to a place where the rails were suspended across a chasm of several yards, the whole embank-

ment having been washed out from beneath them. Of course, the train could not venture over this fragile bridge, and we had to proceed on our journey, sitting on our luggage, on a trolley pushed by relays of black boys—and make the best of it. As to the possibility of “breaking the journey” anywhere, no one seems ever to think of doing such a thing. If a breakdown occurs near to a group of huts, so much the better; but for the most part, even then the train is to be preferred. The line, when we travelled it in November, was only a two-foot gauge, and naturally the railway carriages were not of a roomy description. Personally, we suffered comparatively little, as through the kindness of the chief engineer and manager we travelled in his inspection car, and so passed our days and nights in comparative comfort.



On the day of our arrival in Beira we were told the train would leave about eight o'clock in the morning, but that to enable us and the other passengers to get ashore it would be delayed half an hour. We naturally thought this a great piece of kindness, and hurried our departure from the steamer so as to be ready in good time. But we had exhausted the sights of Beira and the afternoon was drawing to a close before our little train started on its journey across the deadly swamps. The night was spent at Bamboo Creek,—a settlement at the verge of the rising ground about sixty miles from Beira,—a place which has since become sadly famous from the sufferings experienced by General Carrington's troops, who were delayed there a few months later. It is hardly an exaggeration to say the noise of the bullfrogs and mosquitoes was deafening; it almost prevented sleep. Our rest was not, however, disturbed by lions, although it is not unusual to hear them at night. We were told that only the night before one had even dared to carry off a poor black boy asleep on a truck at the station.

The line over these malarious swamps and through all the country infested by the tse-tse fly, fatal to horses, is truly a marvellous example of what may be accomplished. So unhealthy was the climate, that of the twenty-one engineers who were originally employed on the work only three have survived. The dangers are now very much less; and living in better houses, having better food to eat, and taking occasional trips to the highlands of Rhodesia, those employed on the line preserve their health and are much less liable to fever; the mortality among the navvies has been reduced from sixty-four to four per cent. The changing of the gauge of the line from two feet to three feet six inches (the gauge of the Cape to Cairo Railway) was begun while we were in Rhodesia and was performed in an incredibly short time; as much as thirty miles was reconstructed in one week, and that in the rainy season.

The climate of Beira and the low-lying Portuguese territory, is in marked contrast to that of the table-land of Rhodesia. At Salisbury the nights, even in summer, are fresh and cool; even at midday, in midsummer, the heat was never really excessive. But at Beira the air was damp and heavy, and from the month of October throughout the summer the thermometer frequently registers one hundred and fifteen degrees Fahrenheit in the day, while at night it cools down only to about ninety-two degrees. The climate of Rhodesia is certainly charming; but on the whole, even in summer, I found that I suffered from cold rather than from heat, so that I frequently forgot I was in the tropics. If it were not for the pure, invigorating air one would feel the roughness and discomfort of travelling very much more. The experiences of our journey from Salisbury to Bulawayo, which I am about to relate, took place, it must not be forgotten, in time of war. The roads, which were then exceptionally bad, have since been put in good repair by the chartered company at great expense. Had it not been for their prompt action it would have been a very much harder task to get the guns through to Mafeking. The relieving force travelled over this route, and the guns were drawn by the very same mules as our coach. The difficulty of getting food by the way is also very much less in times of peace. In other and less warlike circumstances it would be easy to procure a cart and mules, and, camping out by the way, to enjoy a pleasant and delightful journey; but luck was against us. Every available mule had gone to the front, and there was no alternative but to go by the public coach. I must confess that I was not at all afraid of the journey, although kind friends did their best to warn us of the inevitable discomforts, and we started with light hearts, one lovely moonlight evening, from Salisbury.

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The coaches are built in the United States—at Concord. Most of them hold twelve people inside in rows of three, six people facing and six back to the mules. By experience we learned that the two corner seats back to the mules are most agreeable. Luggage on these journeys is a consideration, as it is charged for at the rate of a shilling a pound, but each passenger may take a rug—or “blanket,” as they are always called—and a small basket of food. The great object is to get as much food as possible into a small space, for when we travelled we could only be sure of two meals—one breakfast and one dinner—during the three days and three nights of continuous travelling.

We made inquiries about the outside places, thinking they might be preferable; but some fellow-passengers, who were old hands at such travelling, explained that when the coach upset the outside passengers were those to suffer; the insides come off, as a rule, with a few bruises, the others getting the broken arms and the like; and this outbalanced



our desire for the open air. Not that one suffered from want of air, for the coach has no windows at all; glass would not stand the jolting for an hour. There is a tarpaulin that one may unroll and pull down over the windows when the rain comes in intolerably. The sun one must bear, for if the tarpaulin is down, it is too insufferably hot.

The first few bumps over stones and through "drifts" or fords, after we left Salisbury, rather amused us; we held on tight, and managed to keep in our seats. We were not tired or sleepy, and it all seemed a good joke, but after two hours or so the jolting began to get a little tiresome and monotonous. Yet by midnight a feeling of drowsiness crept over me, in spite of the variety in the jolts and bumps, and gradually one's hold of the leather strap by the window relaxed, and for a few seconds it was impossible to resist the desire for sleep. But hardly had the sounds of the cracking whip and the driver's shouts to the ten mules got confused in dreamland when a rude awakening was caused by the bang of one's head against the hard wooden frame of the window or the ceiling as the coach descended a more than usually steep "drift" and the mules plunged among rocks and water. After that I gave all my energy to keeping awake; and the desire to hold on at all costs was stimulated by the thoughts of a possible—nay, probable—black eye. Towards three o'clock in the morning the moon set, and we arrived in darkness at one of the stables where the mules were changed.

We were informed by the Cape boy driver that there would be half an hour's halt. Oh, the delight of that short rest! The two other travellers—a doctor and his bride, bound for Fort Victoria—joined in an improvised picnic. We boiled our kettle over a spirit-lamp; a cup of tea with preserved milk and biscuits had its usual reviving effect, and we were fairly fresh by the time the mules were "inspanned" and the journey recommenced. There are two coachmen required to manage the ten mules. The chief, who is called the "driver," holds the whips,—a long one on bamboo, like a fishing-rod, and a short one like a hunting whip,—while the second man, the "leader," holds the reins. The driver calls each mule by name, such as "Steinbok," "Old-Buck," "Coffee," or "Cheeky," usually with some strong epithet in Dutch. He can pick out each particular mule for chastisement with his long whip, but frequently jumps off the coach and runs beside them and encourages them by voice and lash. Having got them into a trot, he jumps on to the step of the coach door and peers in at the passengers before clambering on the box again.

By ten o'clock in the morning we reached Fort Charter. The place is marked in large letters on maps of Rhodesia, but it scarcely contains as many houses, or even huts, as there are letters in the words. The good breakfast we got there, however, fully compensated for any other defects. The meal was served at the house of the one farmer of

the district, who appears to be a keen and enterprising agriculturist. He keeps large herds of cattle, has a good supply of poultry, and shows a well-stocked garden and orchard, in which apples, apricots, peaches, pears, guavas, and many other kinds of fruit-trees flourish. After this soothing change we started again over the dreary "Charter flats," which were one continuous bog owing to recent rain. The mules splashed along at a foot-pace, while we experienced several hours of burning sun and heat, which was followed by a gloomy evening, with heavy clouds that closed in with thunder and rain. Some time in the night we reached Gukeldoven, when our fellow-travellers left us, as they had to wait there two days for a post-cart in which to continue their journey. We were to stop an hour or more, but as the one room was occupied, we were content to eat some dinner and try to get a short sleep in the coach. Our little rest was broken by vivid lightning, crashing thunder, and by such heavy rain that we had to hold our umbrellas up inside the coach!

This downpour did not improve the roads; and when we lumbered on towards morning, but still in the dark, we found the mud heavier and the pace slower than before. The first excitement after daylight was the appearance of wild ostriches, a fine cock bird and two hens, a sight which is now extremely rare. The next incident was hardly so pleasant. We were endeavoring to eat some breakfast, helping ourselves out of our basket, which was on the floor of the coach, when down we went into a drift—this time to cross a rather formidable river, the Sebakwe. The rains of the previous night had swollen it considerably and we were made aware of the fact by the basket which contained our breakfast beginning to float, while some six inches of water surged round our feet. Later in the day we arrived at one of the stables—a tin shed with thorn zariba; there we found further traces of the storm: six out of the ten mules had been killed by lightning. We seemed to delay longer than is usual at these halting-places. The scene was anything but pleasant, with great vultures hovering around. During the afternoon we reached a place famous for its mud, called Lalapan, from a Kaffir word signifying "to lie down," so named from the number of wagons and oxen which come to grief there.

Lalapan was true to its tradition: the coach came to a stand-still. We were told to get out, and accordingly did so, our feet vanishing at each step in black mud. A wagon which had broken down blocked the passage of the drift. The driver informed us that the chances were in favor of the coach upsetting in the drift, which he was going to try to cross by a circuitous route, and that we must find our own way over as best we might. I was still hunting about for the least muddy and most shallow part of the water when the driver (who had taken off his boots and stockings) gallantly came to the rescue and carried me safely

through this "slough of despond." Before we left the spot we had the satisfaction of seeing thirty-four oxen, "spanned" together, drag the dilapidated wagon out of the drift.

It is marvellous how much a coach will stand without being quite overturned. Over and over again that evening, as we approached Gwelo through the black mud, I thought we were really upset, but after subsiding at an angle of forty-five degrees in a black hole half full of water, we always, somehow, found ourselves out of it again, though only to be tossed into a similar hole on the other side. At length Gwelo and a good dinner, in quite a smart hotel, were reached, and we were told we could have two hours' rest. How gladly did I throw myself down on a really comfortable bed and close my tired eyes! But scarcely had I done so when there came a rap at the door, and the hotel-keeper called to us to come out at once, as the roads were in such a bad state that unless we started without delay we could not hope to reach Bulawayo before dark the next day.

By that time we were in a resigned condition of torpor, reduced to a sort of pulp by bumps and bruises. We took our places, therefore, in the coach, and, in a feeble, listless way, prepared for twenty-four hours more of ceaseless, sleepless jolting. But even these came to an end, and what was left of us was landed safely at the Grand Hotel, Bulawayo.

Truly, Bulawayo needs to be very attractive to compensate for the discomforts of reaching it. But on looking back at the kindly welcome we received, the pleasant days "in town,"—as they say there,—and the still more charming days in the Matopo hills, we feel we can forgive the coach and forget its torments.

The return journey was, perhaps, the greatest trial, as we knew what we were in for. But there was no monotony; the two journeys were very different. In going we had the coach nearly to ourselves, and being light, it bounced about in its most lively manner. On the return journey it was full to overflowing, and being heavily laden, it stuck fast more frequently. A fresh lot of four hundred volunteers left Bulawayo for the front while we were there, and this added to the alarm of the more timid inhabitants, who made a rush to get away. Food too was very dear; no vegetables could be got except at exorbitant prices; potatoes fetched from ten pounds to fifteen pounds a sack. Every place in the coach was taken.

For the first twenty-four hours—that is, as far as Gwelo—we were thirteen people and a little boy and two dogs inside; this did not allow much room for stretching stiff and tired limbs. After Gwelo the coach was changed for a smaller one, to hold nine people, and we were eight; but that was heavy enough. We took four hours to do seven miles, and about every half hour the men were called upon to get out. Ladies

are occasionally allowed to remain in, but unless it were actually to wade across a drift, they prefer getting out to being played cup-and-ball with inside. Our fellow-passengers were all equally tired, but equally philosophical and resigned. No one thinks of grumbling at the discomforts; they are taken as a matter of course. Each night, as the darkness closed in, they enlivened us with stories of adventure of which lions were the central feature, and many of the incidents were supposed to have taken place near the district we happened to be traversing. But my nerves were ready for anything by that time—even lions!

The last night we came to an unusually bad bit of road. The driver kindly informed us that, in spite of our good luck hitherto, we might fully expect to be upset during the next stage. Thus prepared, we started on in the darkness, holding on more firmly than usual. Then the silence was broken by the passenger who rarely spoke. In a solemn voice he said, "On my last journey this coach was overturned just at this spot and one passenger was killed dead on the spot!" We passed safely, however.

At about three o'clock in the morning an unusually loud cracking of whips warned us that our troubles were over and that we were approaching Salisbury. I do not think anyone was sorry that drive was at an end. Time has healed the bruises, and we can now look back with equanimity, even with pleasure, to our never-to-be-forgotten coach journey.



## THE DANDELION

BY LILLIAN HOWARD CORT

**H**E smoothed with pride his yellow hair,—  
He liked its color, vain young chap,—  
And pitied Daisy just because  
She tucked hers in her snowy cap.  
"Oh, ho," he cried, "my hair's so thick,  
I couldn't do that if I tried."  
"You'd keep it longer if you did,"  
The Daisy with a smile replied.  
Alas, her words were all too true,  
For, left uncovered day and night,  
The sun and rain beat on his head  
And turned his golden locks to white.  
And soon a dreadful thing occurred,  
At which the Daisy looked appalled,  
A blustering wind swept by, and lo!  
He left the poor old fellow bald.

# THE PERSECUTION OF A PUP

*By Cy Warman*

*Author of "Frontier Stories," "The Story of the Railroad," etc.*



WHEN they wanted to wean Spot they took him to town, where he became the playmate of a little boy and a little girl whose home was the last house on the left as you passed out into the country. The first night he cried constantly for his mother, who was out at the kennels, and his mother at the kennels cried for him. The next day he learned to lap milk from a saucer, and that night he slept like a tired child. In a few days he learned to follow the little boy and the little girl and to run and play with them.

In front of this house, as already intimated, the avenue ended and the road began. At the other end of that road there lived a squatter who was not a nice person to know. He had a reputation for taking things that did not belong to him, and the game-wardens knew he trapped deer out of season, but they could not catch him. No particular country, clan, or tribe could be condemned on account of the squatter, for many had contributed to his make-up, including the African and the Indian. He was a curious composite collection of cussedness that could scarcely be matched on the American continent. His hogan was the last house on the rough road that ran away to the hills. It should have been on Bitter Creek, for he was bad. Beyond his house there was a trail, and at the end of the trail a wilderness.

Two or three times each month the squatter passed in and out of the town, and when he saw the hound pup playing with the children on the wide lawn he coveted the pup. Two or three times he stopped, rang the side-door bell, and asked if they wanted some new potatoes, though he knew he had no potatoes.

The father of the children was very fond of dogs and was master of the hounds. He caused the gardener to build a nice little home for the pup under the wood-shed where he would be sheltered from the sun and rain. The pup prospered and grew round and plump. He could not have been happier out at the kennels than here with the happy children.

In addition to playing with his little playmates he had great fun chasing cats. Over the front lawn, the side-yard, the back-yard, the barn-lot he reigned, and everyone about the place liked him and

laughed at him. Sometimes stray chickens from over beyond the cross street, which was in the country, came in, and when Spot saw them he made a run for them that sent them screaming and fluttering over the low iron fence. One day a little wasp of a game-cock slipped through between the pickets, and when Spot saw him he went for him. The little boy and the little girl watched him lope down the lawn, his tail swinging round and round like a switchman's arm in a back-up signal. The game-cock stood his ground until Spot was only about four inches away, when he moved to one side as the pup panted past him. The pup stopped, went about, and made another run at the chicken, but the cock side-stepped. Spot appeared to see here what promised to be a great game of bumble puppy, but the game-cock was not playful. After tilting his head this way and that way and giving the cock another back-up signal with his tail, the pup started to walk the chicken down. He approached slowly, two or three steps at a time. When he had come up to within a few feet of the cock he rushed him. It never once occurred to the game-cock to caitiff, but when the pup approached he winged himself up about eleven inches from the lawn. As the pup passed under the cock hooked him in behind with his keen gaffs, and the pup screamed murder. Making a wide circle he loped back to his friends.

After flapping his wings and crowing loudly the little game-cock walked away to the country again, while the boy, red-faced and severe looking, heaved great imaginary stones at the scene of the trouble. The frightened pup put his head down in his mistress's lap and cried himself to sleep. Once he woke with a start and a little cry, and then with a long, deep, quivering sob he fell asleep again, while the child patted and petted and little-mothered him in that gentle way that women have with things they love.

Under the arch of the evergreen gate the squatter slouched into the side-yard one sultry Saturday afternoon. The little girl was having a party. Instinctively the little folks shrank from the strong, rough man, but the pup bounded out, jumping two jumps forward and one back, with an occasional half jump sidewise. Encouraged by the pup, the little girl stepped out from the group, called "Spot! Spot!" stamped her feet, and then waited. The squatter made an awkward grab at his soiled cap and asked for a drink of water. The little girl tripped off to fetch it, while the squatter petted the pup and called him by his name. When the man passed out under the green gateway the pup followed him. Across the front lawn he loped, while the squatter, pretending not to notice him, stopped occasionally, called him Spot, and petted him. At the gate the pup stopped, but the man, fooling with his horse's harness, kept calling "Spot! nice Spot! Come, Spot!"

and presently the pup romped out. The squatter scooped him up with one big hand and dropped him in the front part of his one-horse wagon.

At first Spot thought it was all a joke, but when the man began to whip up and a cloud of dust rose between him and his home he tried to jump out. "Lay down, you kyote," yelled the squatter, "lay down," and he put a number ten boot on the pup's ribs and pressed him up against the front end-gate. The old wagon rattled on, the dust drifted over the dash and settled in suffocating clouds on the luckless pup. For the twentieth time the squatter glanced back, and finding the white road still clear of pursuers, he pulled a long black bottle from a heap of old bags and drank. Hours of this agony the pup had, and many a long, strong pull the man had at his big, black bottle.

The merry, laughing children, busy at their play-house games, did not miss Spot until the day was drawing to a close. They hunted high and low, but to no purpose. The little girl's pillow was wet with weeping that night, and the boy promised to do great violence to the man that stole their puppy-dog.

The sun had dropped behind the hills when the old horse stumbled up to the back door of the cabin which was to be Spot's new home. A young woman, half Indian, came out and squatted on a rough stone that served as a step at the rear door. The man lifted the limp pup and dropped him at the woman's feet. The latter held a hand out, and when Spot saw it he dragged himself up into her lap. The squatter tumbled from the seat, caught the pup by the neck, and threw him back over the wagon. "Now you keep yer han's offen that thare pup, —unerstan'!" he snapped, glaring at the woman, who shrank back into the dark room. "I brung 'im out 'ere to larn 'im some sense," he growled, unhitching his horse.

That night Spot slept on the bare ground under the old wagon, and when the squatter came out next morning was able to stand up and walk. He had not eaten for twenty-four hours, but had cooled his hot, swollen tongue in the crystal waters of the little river that came out of the hills near the squatter's house.

While the man looked after the thin horse the woman gave Spot some crusts of bread soaked in goat's milk. With a warm breakfast Spot so forgot himself and his troubles as to run down the path to meet the man as he came from the corral. A big boot struck the pup and tumbled him over. Picking himself up, he came romping at the man's feet again as if to say, "I knew it was an accident," but this time the boot drew back, swung like a pendulum, caught the pup in the middle, and sent him whirling ten feet away. "That's the biggest fool pup I ever see," he said to his wife as he entered the house. "You kick 'im an' he'll come rite back for more. Kids and wimmin'll spile the best dog ever lived—but I'll l'arn 'im."

The semi-savage, unsatisfied soul of the half-white woman longed for the love of some living thing. Her heart warmed to the pup, but she dared not show it when the man was about. For every caress she gave him the squatter gave him a kick.

In a little while the pup seemed to understand that the man was jealous of him, and to hide his feelings for his mistress when his master was near. By the end of the summer Spot had grown to be a pretty tough pup—a good chunk of a dog, as the squatter would say. He had learned to rough it, to avoid the sun and rain, and the squatter's boot.

One day, when the man had been with the black bottle, he caught the pup drinking warm milk from a broken crock, and kicked him as hard as he could kick. The pup landed on the second strand of a low, barbed-wire fence. Going in he caught, tangled the two top wires about him, and hung there. The more he pulled down the harder the twisted wires pressed against him, and the more he tried to free himself the deeper the barbs bit into his flesh. The woman heard him scream and ran out to rescue him. This all the more enraged the squatter. Catching the woman by the shoulder, he threw her back and proceeded to kick the pup out of his trouble.

Now a dog has a world of sense. Spot knew that the woman wanted to help him. He knew too, when the man approached, that he would only add to his agony. As the big boot swung the pup yelled. Terrific as the blow was, it failed to free him, and again the big boot swung. The pup was almost blind, hanging head down and suffering so. Blood was on the squatter's boot, but he kept kicking away until the tortured animal tore loose. The moment the pup got to his feet he started for the hills. He knew his mistress was powerless to protect him. His flesh was torn, his hide ripped open in a dozen places. He could not run very fast, at least he did not until he glanced back and saw the squatter coming after him. That was enough. He forgot his hurt, and, laying his short, sharp stubs of ears back, he made a dun-colored streak in the stunted shrubbery of the foot-hills.

At the top of a ridge, half a mile away, he stopped and looked back. Seeing that he was at last free from his tormenter, he lay down upon a flat rock to rest, and finally fell asleep from sheer exhaustion.

The sun had gone down when he awoke with a start. Trembling, he stood up with an awful sense of danger. He moved his feet and twisted his stiff neck to make sure that he still lived. He smelled a strange smell, and, turning, saw a mountain lion crouching ten feet away. Instantly he tumbled from the shelf of rock into the narrow ravine up which he had travelled that morning. The pup had scarcely slipped from the stone when the lion leaped on it, only to find that the quarry was gone. The pool of blood that the dog had left kept the



wild beast busy until the outcast had dragged himself down as near as his idea of safety would allow him to come to the ranch-house.

The next morning the man went out to find the pup, but the pup saw him first. All the squatter saw was the pup's tail as it went around a rock.

Weeks after, when prowling in the foot-hills, the squatter came upon a lion. Waiting for an opening for a dead shot, the man saw that the lion was creeping up on something. It might be a deer, and, although the deer season was past, there would be no harm in taking a dead or wounded deer from a lion. So he waited, but a moment later the wreck of a dog that he had tortured into madness and turned against mankind bounded out of a clump of alders and ran straight for him. The moment the dog saw the man he turned and raced back into the wilderness, preferring to take chances with the lion to another meeting with the man.

Hating him for having escaped, the squatter raised his rifle and sent a leaden missile crashing through the cedars where the dog was getting away.

One day the dog stooped to drink at a clear pool of water, and when he saw his mirrored self he backed away, growled, and then went to another place and drank where his image was lost in the ripple of the rill. Always after he shunned that particular pool, for in it he had seen a strange wild animal, with a hideous head, like the head of a hyena, and hair that stood out stiff like the plumage of a porcupine.

One moonlight night, while making his way down a narrow cañon, the dog came face to face with a young wolf. They both stopped, half defiant, half afraid, and glared at each other. Each disputed the other's trail, both were hungry, but neither felt sure that the other would be good and proper food. The wolf had been wounded, and the wound was fresh. That day a bullet from the squatter's gun had ploughed a shallow furrow across the back of her neck. Out to the outcast wolf a wave of sympathy went from the wandering canine, and an answering wave came back. In some way, as yet unknown to man, they sent brief, wireless messages back and forth across the untracked snow. The wolf lifted her nose that had been pointing straight out at the dog, and the dog lowered his head and took a few steps forward. When he stopped and wagged his tail the wolf advanced a few feet, assumed a natural pose, and waited. They were beginning to understand each other. At that moment a cotton-tail, chased by a fox, darted 'round a rock and brought up midway between the wolf and the dog. Before the frightened rabbit could recover from his first surprise they were both upon him. The luckless rabbit perished ignominiously, almost instantly.

In a little while the wolf was leading off up the cañon, the dog following close behind her, leaving only a red spot on the snow where the cotton-tail had died.

After that the wolf and the wild dog hunted together, killed together, ate and slept together. There were no other wolves near the squatter's ranch. The same hard man who had hammered the gentleness and kicked the kindness out of the dog had killed her parents, made her an orphan, and him an outlaw. The dog was not much of a beauty, but he was company, and that was what she lacked. She took him on long runs into the wilderness, showed him her hiding places—dark caves with doors barely big enough to let them in and narrow enough to shut out his arch enemy, the lion. He showed her the way to the squatter's ranch, and she taught him all the tricks known to the hunting and hunted habitants of the hills.

One night when they were nosing about the squatter's corral Spot saw a piece of cold roast beef hanging on a barb of the wire fence. He was in the act of reaching for it when the wolf sprang between him and the bait, beneath which a cruel steel trap yawned, and into which the dog was walking. The wolf stood on her hind feet, put her front feet over carefully between the barbs, lifted the prize, and backed away. Many a trap did the squatter set for the dog and his consort, and many a lonely hour he kept watch at the window of his cabin, rifle in hand, but the wolf and the wild dog avoided his trap and his gun.

At the end of a year weird tales of strange wild animals began to come into the town from the hills. Spot's short, sharp ears, that had been shortened and sharpened by the squatter's sheep-shears, gave him a fierce, wild look that made the half-breed trappers cross themselves when they saw him.

Two years in the wilderness, and the runaway dog was as wild as his wolf-wife and as cunning as a fox. More than once had he caused the squatter to curse the day he brought him out to the hills to "l'arn" him, for he taught his children and his children's children to prey on his persecutor and disturb his peace.

One night, near the end of a long, hard winter, when the snow was deep and the hunting bad, the wolf and the wild dog went down the gulch. The night was moonless and the stars were obscured by cold, gray clouds. While the squatter slept they stole into his corral and strangled his goat. The cry of the dying goat brought the man to her rescue, but so hastily that he arrived wholly unarmed. The dog saw him coming and cleared the fence, but the wolf, with her teeth in the goat's neck, saw nothing until the squatter grabbed her by the hind legs and kicked her loose. Turning, she began snapping at her captor, and as often as she reached him her sharp teeth cut deep

## The Sound of the Axe

into his flesh. Seeing his companion in danger, the dog returned and tackled the man, sinking his teeth in one of the squatter's legs.

The squatter yelled as the pup had yelled when he was caught in the wire fence and kicked out, and now, as then, the woman came to the rescue. She carried the rifle and fired it off as she came into the corral. At the crack of the gun the wolf and the wild dog went over the fence and up the cañon.

For many days the squatter lay in his cabin, moaning, weak from the loss of blood. During these days he had ample time to think over his past life and muse upon the general effect of man's inhumanity to other animals.

In time the squatter recovered, but the following winter brought such a pest of wolf-dogs in the foot-hills that he was forced to give up every animal he owned save the cayuse and the cat.



## THE SOUND OF THE AXE

BY FRANCIS STERNE PALMER

THE young moose thought this alien sound  
    Meant some new breed of wolf or hound,—  
    But the bull who led them understood,  
And made for the North and a wilder wood.

The lynx-cat snarled his hate and fear,  
Snorted shrill the listening deer,—  
A flash of gray, a flash of red,  
Showed where lynx and red deer fled.

Out from his lair the black bear flung,  
Left his mate to carry her young,  
Headlong fled to a distant den,—  
He knew this sound was a sound of men!

Soon but faint, receding tracks  
Remain to a forest plagued by the axe!

# THE WITCH OF THE HUNT

*By Alfred Stoddart*



THE spring races of the Meadowthorpe Hunt Club were in progress. Along the improvised race-course which partially surrounded the polo-field and skirted the lawn of the club-house a number of vehicles of various sorts, ranging from four-in-hand coaches to break-carts, were drawn up, and the whole scene, the fresh green of the turf lighted by the gay gowns of the women, the blue sky overhead, and the smiling landscape all around, was one which might readily defy the brush of an artist.

A little, blue-eyed girl, whose trim riding-habit betrayed a perfect figure, albeit slight, and whose sunny hair beneath her straw riding-hat escaped in tiny ringlets, as though defying the attempted severity of its "doing up," whose dainty feet in swagger riding-boots could just be seen beneath the habit fastened up to her waist, Peggy Strangeways, the "Witch of Meadowthorpe," made her way unescorted and untended from the club-house porch through the throng of carriages and people to the improvised paddock, where a tent had been erected to shelter the Clerk of the Scales and his paraphernalia.

The Witch of Meadowthorpe had won her title not from the spells which she cast over mankind, although she often amused herself in this very manner, but by her wonderful influence over horses. Not only did she "witch the world" with horsemanship, but the horse as well. She seemed to cast a spell over all equine nature. The most vicious brute in her hands was as gentle as a Shetland pony. Don't smile. Such things do not belong to the realm of pure fiction. There are really folk whom horses know and understand—all but the criminal degenerates of horse-kind, who will not know and do not wish to understand.

Peggy made her way into the weighing-tent and the men stood aside respectfully to let her pass. The Meadowthorpe races are entirely free from any rough or common element, and there was nothing strange or inappropriate in a woman, especially Peggy Strangeways, going into the weighing-tent. She was in search of someone. Had anyone seen John Fogarty?

"Mornin', Miss Peggy," said Fogarty a moment later when she encountered him just outside the tent. The bell had just rung for the first race—a polo-pony affair—and there was much excitement in getting the little racers saddled and off to the starting-post.

"Good-morning, John. Are you going to start Whalebone?"

"'Deed we are, Miss, but as for stoppin' him—well, that's another matter," said Fogarty, his honest red face lighting up with pleasure at his own wit.

"How is Mr. Braddon this morning?"

"I guess Mr. Jack must be getting all right again. He was a-cussin' pretty strong this morning 'cause he couldn't ride instead o' settin' trussed up like an ole woman in a run-about, with two broken ribs and a collar-bone busted."

"Is he here yet?"

"Not he. But he'll be here in time to see Whalebone break Tim Grogan's neck for him."

"Don't talk so, John. You make me shudder. Whalebone can't be so bad as all that."

"I've handled some bad uns, Miss, and I don't want a wuss one than Whalebone—when he is bad. For he's like a lot more good horses and some women,—beggin' your pardon, Miss,—just like the little girl, you know, with a curl down the middle of her forrid. When's he's good he's orful good, but when he's bad he's 'orrid."

"John," said Peggy, after Fogarty had finished his eulogy, "step aside a little. I want to speak to you quietly."

She whispered a few words into Fogarty's respectfully inclined ear which brought a look of horror to his honest face, and to which he vouchsafed no answer but a decided shake of his head in the negative. A few more words from Peggy elicited nothing more than further and more decided shakes of the head, but Peggy's witchcraft was not for nothing.

By and by honest John Fogarty's head ceased wagging sideways and remained stationary, and ultimately it went up and down, slowly and reluctantly, but still up and down. Peggy's witchcraft had at last prevailed. Whereupon the witch, having cast her spell, gave him a few parting injunctions and vanished, leaving Fogarty as bewildered and anxious as was ever an honest Irishman.

Jack Braddon had been laid up for the last two weeks with two ribs and a collar-bone broken. Gossip had it that there had been another fracture of a far more serious nature—in short, that Peggy Strangeways had broken his heart. Certainly Jack was in a very blue and despondent condition for a man who had only sustained such injuries as are looked upon as the fortunes of war in the hunting-field.

It did seem a little rough. After hunting and dancing and flirting with him all winter, Peggy had suddenly sent Jack about his business with the advent of spring for no apparent reason whatever, at least no reason which was apparent to the Meadowthorpe set.

There was no logical reason why she shouldn't marry Jack Braddon.

He was well off, young, good-looking, and as passionately fond of horses as was Peggy herself. All Meadowthorpe, except a few impressionable young men who had been touched themselves by Peggy's witchcraft, had arranged the match some months back, and it was looked upon as highly inconsiderate of Peggy to upset their plans. But upset them she did, and Jack Braddon's too, for some reason known but to herself, and doubtless a good and sufficient one in her own estimation. After all, she was one of the two persons most concerned in the matter.

Jack had entered Whalebone in the steeple-chase more in a spirit of bravado than ambition to win it. To tell the truth, he did not expect the horse to stand any chance of winning. Whalebone was a recent purchase, an animal of which he knew nothing except that he had a devilish temper and considerable speed when he chose to run straight, which was not often. He was a chestnut, fully sixteen hands high and a grand type of a thoroughbred.

As Jack could not ride himself, he would not ask any of his friends to ride the brute, so Fogarty, his head man, had orders to put a professional up, Tim Grogan, a young Irishman who had gotten quite a reputation as a light-weight steeple-chase jockey. Jack's interest in the whole affair was lukewarm at the best, and he only drove on the course in time to see the Hunters' Cup Steeple-Chase run off.

The saddling-bell had sounded and a bugle blast had summoned the horses to the starting-point, some quarter of a mile away. Jack saw Whalebone, his ears laid back and the whites of eyes showing, swathed in his clothing, being led up and down by a groom in front of the weighing-tent.

Then Fogarty came out of the tent accompanied by a slight figure wearing Jack's racing colors.

"Thunder!" said Jack to himself, "that boy can never hold the horse."

But Fogarty gave the jockey a "leg up," and Whalebone, after lashing out vigorously once or twice, put his head down and went off quite peaceably in a romping gallop, his rider sitting him easily in spite of the awkward gait.

At the post, however, he seemed to repent of his good behavior and raised a terrible commotion. The other horses were all lined up and standing quietly waiting for the word when Whalebone, by a kind of sidelong waltzing manœuvre, managed to break up and demoralize the whole lot.

Having succeeded in doing this he made a sudden and determined bolt for the rear, but was, fortunately, brought up short by his plucky rider before he got under full speed. There was a delay of several minutes before Whalebone returned to the place chosen to start the steeple-chase from, but when he did so he presented the truly astounding spectacle of a handsome chestnut horse walking soberly to his

allotted place in the line with the air of an equine who never in all his life was guilty of the slightest indiscretion.

Finally, having bunched all of the eight starters fairly well and gotten them all in motion, the starter dropped his flag, and the well-known cry, "They're off!" was heard from the club-house lawn, nearly a quarter of a mile distant. The steeple-chase course lay along the valley skirting the hillside and, at first, away from the club-house, to which it returned in a straight line for the last mile.

Jack Braddon was watching the start through his field-glasses, when suddenly he dropped them with a short exclamation.

"Oh, I say, Goring," he shouted to Ralph Goring, who happened by on horseback at that moment, "lend me your horse."

"When?"

"Now—right away!" shouted Jack, excitedly clambering down with some difficulty from his carriage. "Here! somebody hold this horse. Quick, Ralph, for Heaven's sake!"

"But you can't ride with all your broken bones," persisted Ralph, as he threw himself from the horse.

"Broken fiddlesticks!" cried Jack as he hoisted himself upon Ralph's bay mare and sent her off in a gallop.

By this time the horses in the steeple-chase were out of sight, having gone around a small grove which concealed them from the crowd for a few moments, and Jack on Ralph Goring's mare was galloping over the course as if to intercept them. There were three or four fences in his way, but he stopped for nothing, and, fortunately, the bay mare was equal to the occasion.

Those who saw him and knew of his damaged frame marvelled greatly, and Ralph Goring held his breath. "The man is mad—stark mad," he said to himself. In a few moments Jack too was lost to the view of the crowd on the club-house lawn.

Then the cry arose, "Here they come!" and down the valley, fully a mile away, could be discerned a little group of galloping horses as they turned into the long stretch for home. Only two horses had been stopped by the fences and the other six were going well together. It would be a close thing for the gallop home.

Ralph Goring picked up Jack Braddon's abandoned field-glasses and levelled them at the flying group. The silk jackets of the riders were just becoming distinguishable.

"By George!" he cried, "it will be close. You could cover them all with a blanket. No—one is dropping back. It looks like Whalebone. Sulky, I fancy, the brute. Why don't the boy use his whip?"

"Whalebone's beaten anyway. He's swerving. And Jack Braddon is galloping alongside—cursing the boy, no doubt. Lamplighter leads. Here they come!" and he put down the glasses. The horses were in plain view now.

True enough, Whalebone was five or six lengths behind the other five horses, which were going well together. He seemed to be at odds with his rider. Suddenly, however, a change came over him. His jockey was seen to lean over and stroke him on the shoulder, then to gather the reins and take a firm hold of his mouth. Whalebone shook his head once or twice and straightened out in earnest. Swiftly and steadily he closed up the gap between him and the other horses, and then he came through with a dash of speed simply phenomenal. The last remaining jump, a stiff four-foot fence, he took on almost even terms with Lamplighter, the leading horse, and all over the course they were shouting, "Watch Whalebone! Watch Whalebone!"

They came past the judges' stand like a charge of cavalry, but Whalebone was a good two lengths in the lead.

As Whalebone's jockey pulled up Jack Braddon threw himself from his horse and grasped the winner by the bridle. A few moments later he assisted the exhausted rider to the weighing-tent to weigh out. Then they left the weighing-tent together, accompanied by John Fogarty.

Jack Braddon was deathly pale. He had suffered untold agony from his injuries during his mad ride of the last few minutes, and, besides, he had other reasons for being pale. Once away from the weighing-tent he turned upon John Fogarty in a rage.

"You can leave me to-day. Do you hear?" he cried. "You're not fit to be trusted. You shall have your month's wages and go."

"He shall do nothing of the sort," said the jockey. "It was my fault, and I"—but the sentence was not finished. Somehow they had reached the club-house, and as they did so Jack fainted dead away from pain. The jockey gave a little cry, and then, as a number of people rushed to Jack's assistance, disappeared up the stairs of the club-house.

A few minutes later Peggy Strangeways came demurely down the steps and hastened into the little sitting-room where Jack lay on a couch. Only the doctor was with him, the former having cleared the room to keep Jack as quiet as possible until he could be removed to his own home. When Peggy entered the room the doctor, who knew a thing or two beyond the mere practice of medicine, discreetly retired.

"What on earth made you do such a thing, Peggy?" asked Jack.

"Oh, I don't know—mischief, I suppose."

"Will you promise me never to do a thing like that again?" continued Jack.

"Why should I promise you?"

"Peggy, you are not to be trusted alone. You ought to have a husband to look after you. Come, Peggy, say the word?"

And she said it—or, rather, she didn't say it—which amounts to the same thing, as we all know.



# THE MASTER OF FATE

*By Clinton Dangerfield*



HE opened his eyes very quietly, believing himself still on ship-board. Then he saw that the walls around him were rough gray rock, crudely mortared together, and instead of the port-hole a shutterless, paneless window let in the sunshine.

Yet his bed might have belonged to the Marianne. It was a ship's berth, fastened to the wall.

Grown impatient of the riddle, he raised himself, but sharp pain darted through his ankle, and with this came a flood of recollections. He remembered now the horrible, helpless tossing of the wrecked vessel, the flight to the boats, their capsizing, and then how he had served to amuse the ocean in its tigerish sport. Again and again he had crawled up the beach only to be dragged back. Then when he had ceased, from mortal fatigue, to care what the issue was, the water took him and flung him high up out of harm's reach. Then oblivion.

How had he come here? He called, strongly and pettishly, and a man entered over whose shrewd and kindly face the word surgeon was written, even if his nervous, sensitive, but strong hands had not said it still more plainly.

"Well, mon," he said cheerily, "there's a note of temper in the voice which says you are as much yoursel' as ever."

"I did not mean it, Doctor, but I'm a bit perplexed. Did you find me on the shore? Were the others saved?"

"There were na others," said the Surgeon gravely. "I found ye on the shore, as ye say, an' bar a twisted ankle and an overdose of salt water ye are not a pin the waur for a bit of rough sea handlin'."

"Where are we? This hut——"

"I dinna see why I should na tell ye the truth. This is the Roger Stanalaus group of islands, and we are the first colony, formerly crew of the Arion."

"The crew of the Arion? They were saved, all of them? Why, I had nearly a dozen personal friends among those passengers! For twelve months we believed them at the bottom of the sea."

"Of our bones were coral made? Na! We're vara much alive. But we've had na word from the outside world for mony a day, an' they're keen to have speech of ye. For mysel', I expect no news. I've neither kith nor kin. I'm fra Edinburgh."

If his patient thought the last information superfluous, he did not say so. His thoughts changed from his friends' safety to the name of the islands.

"The Stanalaus group! Why, my uncle discovered them, about twenty years ago. They are utterly out of the way of passing steamers and a mere barren mass of stone. How have you lived?"

"Na so barren as your uncle thought. This central island is a little oasis. Up here, like a nest, snuggles a bit kingdom of a thousand acres or so, with rich soil, and we saved seeds from our wreck. Then we've seabirds' eggs an' fish, a vera nutritious diet."

"But, good God, we may be here fifty years before a steamer passes!" He clutched the Scotchman's arm. "Do you appreciate that?"

"We've had some time in which to comprehend it," said the Surgeon dryly. "And we take the matter accordin' to our different dispositions. To return to yoursel'. Can ye see some of the others soon? They've had no news, as I said, an' for some of them ye must hold the keys of life an' death."

"Let me rest a few moments. I will be ready soon."

"Surely, mon," returned the Surgeon cheerily. "Call when ye've had time to think a bit."

He withdrew, and the other lay there, staring dreamily through the window.

Then they really were all there—these people he imagined dead. They were of far more interest to him than the lost crew of his own ship, among whom he had no friends.

Yes, all there, all ready to hang breathlessly on his lips. Droll that he should be awaited longingly by the very people who, in the London drawing-rooms, had made him feel that he was only ordinary Dick Fenton, good to carry a fan or pronounce on a glass of champagne. Merely Dick Fenton, club idler and lounge, yet conscious all his life of a steady envy of the stronger natures who had bent Fate to their will.

But his temperament had been fatally against him. He had drifted through life aware that he would always drift, though endowed with a sympathetic insight into the natures around him which a less indolent man would have used as a stepping-stone to power.

What were those words the Surgeon used—"the keys of life and death!" He laughed gently to himself. Nothing in them! They merely meant he was a walking newspaper to be cast aside when read. Well, for the present, at least, they must turn to him, and to him alone, for knowledge. After all, what was knowledge or life? Didn't some old duffer say it was only—opinion? And in this case— The half-blurred thought flashed to clearness at a single leap!

He, the driftwood, thrown up by the ocean, he was no less a person than the Master of Fate! For what he said they would all believe. That belief would lie undisturbed for perhaps a generation, long enough to shape their lives as he willed. Exultation flooded his whole being. They were his—his puppets. He would deal gently with them. He felt a tenderness that yet had in it an iron resolve, at variance with his past. Then a sweet but anxious voice floated in.

"Oh Mr. McAlister, when will he see us?"

The listener lifted his voice in response, "Now, if you will."

The door opened hastily but quietly, and a slender figure crossed the threshold. Behind her loomed the manly form of a young fellow of perhaps six-and-twenty. The couple greeted him with an eagerness that touched him with a sense of luxury, and he answered smilingly their inquiries as to his own well-being.

He knew the girl's history, the details of her miserable married life; knew still better the dissipated scoundrel whom she called husband, and whom she was obediently starting to rejoin when she boarded the Arion. He felt the question trembling on her lip. At last she said bravely:

"May I be selfish now? I want to ask for news?" She paused, leaned against the rough wall and said flatly, "My husband?—is he living?"

The Master of Fate did not answer immediately. He looked past her into the eyes of the waiting man near her and read an agony of anxiety. The young fellow's hands were clinched until the Master of Fate fancied the nails were drawing blood. He swept the man's face again, and was satisfied. Between these two was no guilty love. With happiness tempting them, and the world far away, they had been observant of the law.

The Master of Fate spoke, clearly and unhesitatingly,—

"Mrs. Lenox, your husband is dead. He died three months ago."

She gave a low cry and hid her face in her hands, but so great was the man's relief that he pushed conventionality quite aside and caught her in his arms.

"Thank God!" he said. "Thank God!"

The Master of Fate smiled on them as they went away. They were jostled in the door by a brusque and hasty step, and a hoarse voice said irritably:

"What was McAlister about that he couldn't let me know Fenton is ready to see visitors! He understands how much I have at stake!" Fenton did not need to see the face. This was the successful speculator, the man whose gains had swollen to such an immense bulk that they formed a huge power, which reached out crawling hands, strangling all opposition, and which had long ago taken the speculator himself

by the throat and wrung him dry of all thought except to increase its own gross body.

Across the whipping waves it called him, and his enforced absence had painted the shadows of hell on his face. He waited for no courtesy questions, but poured out a dozen inquiries, the gist of all being the present condition of his fortune.

"You are nervous about your money?"

"Nervous!" the speculator grew purple over the weakness of the word. "Nervous! Good God! I can't eat or sleep for thinking of it, and of how those fools will mismanage the market!"

"Don't you think," said the Master of Fate composedly, "that your life here has proven what a precious time you used to spend for a beastly small return? You live as well here as there. Judging by your skin, you're a long ways healthier."

"My fortune! Tell me—you must have heard how it stands! My brother has inherited it, I suppose. What has he done with it?"

He bent over the Master of Fate, clutching him fiercely, pouring down on him hot, feverish breath. The latter looked up with inscrutable eyes.

"Your money is gone—every penny of it. He hadn't your ability for such things."

The speculator staggered from the room, and the other raised himself slightly to meet the frank, open countenance of the man he most admired, a stainless, white-haired soldier of fifty, beloved everywhere for his quiet modesty, although his men had endless tales to tell of their Colonel's dash and bravery in the field. Sometimes they were wont to end by cursing the degenerate son who long ago had abandoned himself to the wildest dissipation, dragging his father's name, as far as he could, in the very dust. But the father's love knew no shadow of turning. A few kindly words for the invalid, and then he faltered eagerly,—

"My son—have you any news of him?"

"Sit here," said the Master of Fate, making room on the berth. "I have news of him. Just before I sailed there was a fire in one of the poor tenements. The people weren't of much consequence, so when it was discovered that a child was trapped by the flames no one seemed to care to risk those terrible burning stairs, from which the trained firemen shrank. Then a man burst through the throng, fought his way up that crackling inferno, and, though crushed on the very threshold as he returned with his burden, the child was saved. If he had faults in life, they were redeemed by this unselfish sacrifice, this dauntless act, that made him equal with the bravest."

He ceased. The gray head near him bowed low and hot tears wet the hand of the Master of Fate as the soldier murmured brokenly,—

"My lad, my noble lad, whom I always trusted and believed in—my hero boy!"

Glorified by a sweet and holy sorrow, he moved away. The Master of Fate received the others, dealing out the replies he thought best for each. His fluent imagination never failed him. He kept every story keenly in hand, and when he rose from his couch he made no blunders.

"Ye've done the whole lot good by your comin'," said the Surgeon two months afterwards. "They are all improved. Even the millionaire, who was always a maist disagreeable man, has begun to think of somethin' beside his vera greasy dollars."

A year went by. From the highest pinnacle of rock floated a flag of distress, but no one hoped anything from it. The Master of Fate watched his creations prosper. He shared their humblest labors, but a new and strange dignity sat on him, which awakened in the others a wondering respect. Only the Scotch Surgeon was unaffected by it and sometimes glanced so searchingly at the Master of Fate that another man might have been disconcerted.

One bright day the colonists announced their intention of hunting turtle-eggs on an adjacent island, whose barren sands were considered first-class incubators by the whole turtle tribe. They were to make a day's picnic of it, and when the Master of Fate volunteered to remain and watch over the flag they were all glad to avoid the thankless task, and soon disappeared, leaving him monarch of all he surveyed.

He spent most of the morning in luxurious idling, and if he thought of the flag at all it was with a sense of amusement over such a useless precaution. Then suddenly he sprang up—was that speck on the horizon a ship?

He ran for the field-glasses saved from the wreck, and adjusted them with shaking fingers. There she was, bearing gracefully onward. It needed no experience to see that she would pass close enough to see the flag.

Most men would have regarded her as a gracious deliverer. The Master of Fate stared on her with tragic eyes.

It was not for himself he suffered. No fear of exposure or shame troubled him, but he was agonized over the danger to his happy puppets. Were the ideal conditions surrounding them to be destroyed at a blow? Must all their healed wounds be torn open?

Without a moment's hesitation he ran for the ladder, but the ladder was gone. One of the sailors had taken it in pieces and carried it with him to construct temporary bridges for the women. And it was the only thing in the shape of timber on the island except a few battered pieces from the wreck used in finishing their stone huts and the flag-staff itself.

But the lonely occupant of the island was undaunted. With set teeth he vowed himself still Fate's Master and began climbing the pinnacle of rock. Never athletic, the task was cruelly hard; the sharp edges cut his fingers mercilessly, but if the flag were down, nothing else would attract attention. The little houses were in the central declivity and quite out of view, but overhead the bunting streamed gallantly to the breeze.

He hugged the stone closer than any desperate wrestler ever did his opponent. Inch by inch he raised himself with muscles that ached wildly from the unaccustomed strain. Up, up, a yard nearer, then another, and then, just as he felt the world slipping from him, his hand grasped the base of the flagstaff.

But the man who dominates fate does not buy his victories cheaply.

The rotten wood broke in his fingers, and he was plunged, staff and all, to the jagged rocks below, while a dull crimson stain spread on the folds of the flag tangled and wrapped around him.

The ship went swiftly along her foamy pathway. He saw the last speck of her shining sails die on the horizon.

At sunset the colonists returned. They missed the flag at once and hurried to the rock, where lay its fallen guardian.

Over the wide bosom of the waters the dying sun cast an infinite beauty and lighted the satisfied face of the Master of Fate, who looked kindly into the anxious eyes around him, although he did not speak.

The Surgeon thought him too nearly gone for words, but suddenly he found strength and raised himself on his elbow.

"You are all mine," he cried clearly. "I, the Lover of Souls, gave you all you have! All you are I made you! I am the Master of Fate!"

He fell back. The Surgeon laid his head above the heart but heard no sound. Hot tears ran down the faces of the colonists. One of the women cried chokingly,—

"To think he was delirious at the last!"

But the Surgeon, who had risen and was gazing out to sea, made no murmur of assent.



## TO THE BODY

BY EDWARD WILBUR MASON

THOU art the Body; dust both weak and strong,  
Who knows but what thou art the Spirit too?  
Thou claim'st naught; but bowed in meekness long  
Thyself forever robs thee of thy due!

# PASSING THE LOVE OF WOMAN

A TRAGEDY OF THE MOUNTAINS

*By Cyrus Townsend Brady*

*Author of "When Blades are Out and Love's Afield," "Hohenzollern,"  
"The Quiberon Touch," etc.*



THERE were but two women in the camp. Martie was one of them, and Martie was the cause of it. The statement that it was on account of her they quarrelled, and it was through the quarrel that the terrible state of affairs was brought about, cannot be denied.

Martie and her mother—her mother was the other woman in the camp, and, except that she had been remotely responsible for Marty years before, she didn't particularly count—had come to the rough little mining settlement with Marty's father, a mining engineer, who represented certain speculative holdings in the East which needed personal attention.

Before they arrived the camp had been a fairly peaceable one: the boys got drunk just about so often, once in a while there was a shooting affair, but Medicine Dog was as orderly a camp as might have been found in Colorado. Until Martie came. It was a serpent, I believe, that introduced the trouble in the Garden of Eden. I wonder what the wild beasts thought of the advent of Eve? At any rate, Martie first reformed and then disorganized Medicine Dog.

Following her arrival there was an ebullition of "boiled shirts,"—come by express in response to telegraphic communications with Denver, the first evidence of the reform. This was followed by the influx of a lone Chinaman, imported for the reboiling of the said shirts, his life, liberty, and the peaceful pursuit of his vocation over the tubs being guaranteed him by the camp, the second evidence of reform! There was a consequent amelioration of manners, proportioned to the prevalence of shirt bosom, too. "Boiled shirts"—I use the language of the camp—are the beginning of that civilization of which "plug hats" are the end. Medicine Dog never got that far, except in its dreams; even Martie was not quite equal to promoting the "plug hat."

The saloon too felt the good—or evil, according to the point of view—effect of Martie's presence, and the wonderful part of it was that Big Sam, who dispensed liquor, profanity, and on occasions, if necessary, bullets from his "Colt's 45," from behind the bar, bore the situation philosophically. He was as much under Martie's sway as anybody else. That was the last evidence of the reform. And when a preacher, a wandering missionary, came along, Big Sam cheerfully, if temporarily, suspended business one Sunday morning and they had services in the saloon, the preacher on the counter to conduct them, and Martie on a table where they could all see her, with a portable organ, to lead the singing.

That was the only time Martie's presence graced the saloon. The effect of her presence there was lasting. The boys could hardly swallow their whiskey during that or the next day.

"It tastes as if it had sugar in it," said Dan Casey mournfully, subtly referring to the sweetening effect of Martie's visit. When it came to choosing between Martie and whiskey, the difficulties of the situation were enough to appal the stoutest heart in Medicine Dog.

Casey signified his change of heart in the matter of clothing by trimming his beard—there was no barber in the camp yet—and by adding a green tie to his shirt, and when MacBurns appeared with a yellow silk streamer across his bestarched bosom, Casey took it as a direct reflection upon his religious and political views, and for a time Medicine Dog threatened to resume its pristine liveliness.

The quarrel was compromised by Martie, for when she artfully caused the news to be circulated that she doted on red or blue ties and could not abide green or yellow ones, Casey and MacBurns discarded the colors of their choice and settled the affair by wearing Martie's.

Martie wore those colors herself. She was the reddest-cheeked, bluest-eyed, and bonniest girl that had ever come across the mountains, so Medicine Dog swore unanimously, at any rate. As occasion served, the various members of the camp maintained Martie's cause with strenuous and generally fatal effect to various gentlemen from other camps who were rashly inclined to question the assertion. Martie would have shone anywhere in the open air, and in womanless Medicine Dog she was a heroine, a queen. That was the beginning of disorganization too.

The two men hardest hit were Jack Elliott and Dick Sanderson. Elliott was a jolly, happy-go-lucky fellow, Sanderson a quieter man, who complemented his companion admirably. They worked a rich claim together on the mountain side with good results. They were steady-going fellows and both were dead shots with the rifle. They were great-hearted young men, who loved each other with an affection that some men develop under certain circumstances for one another until a



woman intervenes. Martie intervened. Both men fell in love with her, and as they were men of education,—being fellow-graduates of the old University of Pennsylvania,—they were not content with the mere blind adoration which the rest of Medicine Dog exhibited. They wanted Martie, and as the days grew longer and they knew her better, they wanted her more and more.

Each man dreamed dreams of a house on the mountain side overlooking the camp with Martie as its mistress and with himself as titular, if not actual, master. There had never been a wedding celebrated in the valley, and they were both united upon the desirability of having one. Each one, however, wanted to be the bridegroom!

Martie recognized the difference between these two men and the rest of the camp, although in no way did they hold themselves aloof from the general society of Medicine Dog—that would not have been tolerated by the rest of the boys. She realized that either of them might legitimately aspire to her hand, for they were in an entirely different category from the rude, humble, faithful adorers like Big Sam and Casey and the boys, and Martie loved one of them.

But Martie was a coquette. It wasn't in a girl of Martie's temperament to be otherwise in a camp with a hundred men in love with her, the only other woman being Martie's mother, and, as I said before, she didn't count when Martie was around. And by degrees that which neither of the men wished, which both of them would fain have avoided, was brought about. There was a dissolution of partnership, a rupture of old associations, a shattering of ancient friendship. As is always the case, where both had loved, they now hated.

I said that they were both good shots with the rifle. That hardly describes their capacities. If the mine had failed, they could have earned a fortune on any vaudeville stage. One of their "stunts"—as the boys called it—was really remarkable. Such was their confidence in each other that when one balanced a little can of whiskey on his head and the other bored a hole through it neatly with his rifle at a distance of sixty yards and upward the spectators hardly knew whether to admire the nerve of the can-holder or that of the marksman the more,—although Casey deprecated the performance on account of the liability of the whiskey to go to waste! They shot equally well, and sometimes the one and sometimes the other held the target. It had grown an old story to Medicine Dog, but strangers always wanted to see the feat performed. After the rupture between them they did it no more, of course.

It was Martie who had separated them, and it was Martie who brought them together again. Both men paid assiduous court to her, and she positively refused under any circumstances to give either a final answer until they became friends once more and swore to accept

her decision without prejudice to that friendship. Martie was a power, and she had her way.

A reconciliation was effected, and the two men went back to work on their joint claim.

Still, Martie hesitated over that decision. Some intuition told her that no promise would avail against the joy on the one hand and the disappointment on the other when she made a choice; but make it she must, and finally, after much hesitation, she announced that she chose Sanderson. His joy could not quite obliterate in her mind the impression caused by Elliott's grief. Elliott was too much of a man, however, to make any open outcry. He believed that if Sanderson had been out of the way he would have been successful, and his belief was probably correct; but the matter had been decided, and he swallowed his disappointment as best he might and bore Sanderson's triumph in silence.

A sporty stranger came to Medicine Dog one day shortly after the engagement was announced, and the conversation in the saloon turned upon the marksmanship of the camp. Medicine Dog prided itself on the ability of Elliott and Sanderson. The stranger was incredulous, and wagers were made and the boys repaired in a body to the Elliott-Sanderson claim and told of the bets. Neither man was anxious for the test, but for the honor of the camp, and because of the disappointment of the boys themselves, they felt that they could not refuse. Each volunteered to hold the can and each urged the other to shoot. Finally they agreed to settle the matter by tossing a coin,—the usual method of settling mooted points.

Fate decided that Elliott was to use the rifle. He seized the weapon and started up the trail to get his distance. In that same moment a grim and ghastly temptation, proportioned in its appeal to the strength of his passion, entered his soul. If he killed Sanderson the field would be free. Martie's affections were not so deeply engaged but that she might be won. The idea whitened his lips and blanched his face and shook his hand, and it occurred at the same moment to Sanderson. He realized, as he walked across the clearing and backed up against a tree, the possibilities of the situation, and his own dark face went as white as that of his companion. But he was game. His emotion was not fear,—at least not fear for himself,—or if it were fear, it was for Elliott. As he prepared to receive the shot he prayed—and he was not a praying man; nobody much at Medicine Dog was in the habit of praying then—that Elliott might be equal to resisting the terrible demand.

As for Elliott, his soul was torn in a perfect tempest. He realized nothing but the fact that there before him was the man who had won the object for which he would have given his soul, that

the man was unarmed, that if he shot him no power on earth could ever connect him with the crime of murder, for he could swear that it was an accident. The best of marksmen sometimes make blunders; all do not continually shoot with the accuracy of William Tell. Satan possessed the man's soul for the moment. Ay, it was the woman who had tempted the man,—so it was in the Garden of Eden,—but this time a woman innocent and unwitting. Poor little Martie! She could not help it, after all.

These thoughts crowded the minds of the two men as they took their stations. Elliott faced Sanderson and slowly raised his rifle. By a violent effort he mastered his trembling as he glanced along the polished barrel and drew the exquisite bead upon the little black spot in the can where he should have sent the bullet.

There was something in the air, in the attitude of the two men, in the situation, which suddenly broke upon the consciousness of the onlookers. They shifted uneasily. Finally Big Sam burst out, amid a chorus of approval:

"For God's sake, Elliott, don't shoot! You're not in the mood to-day, old man. We'll willin'ly lose the bet. Give the stranger his money, boys."

It was Sanderson who broke the silence.

"What are you afraid of, Sam?" he cried, taking the can in his hands. "By Heaven, the man doesn't live," he shouted, translating everybody's thought in his impetuosity, "that dare charge my partner with foul play!"

"No, no, of course not," came in expostulation from the crowd of spectators.

"That's right, then," said Sanderson calmly. "Go ahead, Jack. I'll trust you."

He lifted the can again to his head, folded his arms, and faced his friend, a little smile on his lips.

Once more Elliott lifted his gun, which he had dropped during the conversation. This time his nerves were quite steady. He glanced along the barrel again. Should he send a shot into that smiling face?—his friend's face? A moment would determine. He aimed long and carefully at the target he had selected.

The smile would have died away from Sanderson's face had he not fixed it there by a determined effort. Elliott again so lingered over his aim that the men once more started to interfere. The tense situation was more than they could bear. What was the matter?

Suddenly the devil that had possessed him released the miner. Elliott's love for man passed his love for woman. He forgot Martie as he faced Sanderson. His courage came back to him and his clearness of vision.

He dropped his rifle, and before anyone could stop him, although Sanderson screamed, "For God's sake, Jack, don't do it!" and the men surged towards him, he whipped out his pistol, pointed it at his own breast, pulled the trigger, and fell bleeding from a mortal wound through the right lung.

"Men," he gasped out brokenly, "you're right—I was going to kill—him—on account of—Martie, you know, but—but he trusted me and—I could—not. Yet I'm a murderer—in the—sight of God—and my punishment—is—this. Dick—don't tell Martie."

There was a look of peace on his face as they gathered around him. They drew back a little as Dick Sanderson knelt down and took him in his arms.

"Jack, Jack!" he sobbed, "I knew your temptation, but I knew you wouldn't shoot me, old man. You were braver than I. I don't know what would have happened if the coin had flipped my way. Oh Jack, I wish to God you had killed me!"

"Now—I'm—forgiven," whispered Elliott feebly, lifting his hand towards the other, and then he smiled, and then it was all over.

"Gentlemen," said Sanderson, crying like a baby, as he rose to his feet, "he died for me."

"And for Martie," added Casey.

"Yes, and for Martie."

"Stranger," said Big Sam, turning to the man who had made the wager, "the money is yours. I wish to God we'd never bet!"

"Gentlemen," said the stranger, "I don't take no money from no gents w'ich is won under them circumstances, but if you gents 'll come down to the saloon and likker with me——"

"That's handsome of you, stranger, but we don't none of us git no likker in this camp to-day. That there saloon closes in Medicine Dog until arter the funeral of the best shot and the whitest-hearted and the finest gentleman that ever lived in the camp," said Big Sam, turning mournfully away.



## A FORGOTTEN POET

BY ARTHUR W. ATKINSON

OF his vast works men called sublime  
 When fickle fame his brow did kiss,  
 Naught, naught remains save one frail rhyme  
 To hold him on the bridge of time,  
 Above oblivion's dark abyss.

# GRATSY

*By George Hyde Preston*



**I**T was late in the evening, and the streets in the neighborhood were quiet.

Gratsy had been in the house for some time. He had entered without invitation, and in a manner quite ingenious.

Nothing on the first floor had been appropriated by him except a piece of cold chicken. Silver was not in his line. He confined himself to money and jewels that were up to a certain standard and easily removed from their settings.

Mounting the stairs, he walked stealthily about in the upper hall.

"I like these old-fashioned houses," he said to himself, "the transoms over the doors help business." A light shone through one of them.

Avoiding the room with the light, he made his silent round, and then returned to the hall.

"Nothing but a few rings and things in the kid's room," he muttered. "I wouldn't like to take those. She might want 'em later. She's a mighty pretty little kid." And Gratsy smiled and nodded to himself.

Then he looked at the lighted transom and thought a moment, still smiling.

"They're sitting in there. It's a fool trick, but I'll do it," and cautiously drawing himself up, he looked in through the transom.

The only person he saw in the room was a man, who stood facing a mirror and holding a pistol to his temple.

Gratsy was shocked and forgot he was a burglar. "Hold on! Don't do that!" he cried.

The pistol clattered on the floor. The man wheeled and pulled open the door just as Gratsy dropped to the floor. The man stared at Gratsy.

"What do you want? What are you doing here?"

"Well," answered Gratsy apologetically, "I guess I came to rob you. but a man who is going to kill himself ought not to mind that much."

"Why did you interfere? You could have done what you wanted to do all the easier if I had."

Gratsy shook his head. "A shot makes a noise and draws a crowd. I might have had trouble persuading them who did the shooting. And besides," he added, smiling, "there's the little kid. You hadn't thought about her, had you?"

The man's face contracted.

"She looks mighty pretty asleep with her arm up over her head," went on Gratsy. "I don't believe you thought about her."

The man said nothing.

"Come," continued Gratsy easily, "let's talk this thing over, and then, if you say so, I'll let you go ahead."

"Why should I talk it over with you?"

"Why not?" retorted Gratsy. "It might help. And if it don't, it will only be putting off the shooting for a few minutes. I should think you would stand it to live that long."

The man looked at Gratsy, and the humor of talking things over with a burglar seemed to strike him.

Gratsy grinned encouragingly.

"What did you look over the transom for?" inquired the man.

Gratsy laughed. "I just wanted to see if the kid looked like her mother."

"Her mother is dead," came in a whisper.

"Oh!" said Gratsy. "Poor little kid! Now you wouldn't leave her too, would you?"

"I shall be arrested in the morning," said the man doggedly.

"Well," answered Gratsy cheerfully, "you might get off. I know a lawyer who——"

"You don't understand—my name——"

"Well, I'll tell you one thing, young fellow. If you shoot yourself to-night, your name is going to stay right where it is now. When you pull the trigger you have made your last play. Hold on and luck may change."

"It can't!" exclaimed the other despairingly. "A man has possession of some papers that—concern me. He can ruin me with them. He offers to give them up for ten thousand dollars. I have till midnight. It is time for him to be here now. Unless I pay to-night he will use the papers. I have tried to raise the money. I can't."

Gratsy wrinkled his forehead and looked straight ahead.

At that moment there came a sharp ring.

"He's come!" gasped the man, and he started towards the pistol that still lay on the floor.

Gratsy made a quick spring for it. His eyes blazed.

"Give the kid a chance, man!" he said. "Go down. Let him in. Bring him up here. I'll hang round the hall, hear him talk. Something might come of it. If there don't, I swear to God I'll give you back your gun, and you can do what you like after he has gone and I have got clear of the house. Go now!"

The man obeyed, and Gratsy, standing in the shadow, watched them cross the hall, enter the room he had left, and close the door.

Gratsy looked at the door and grinned. "It's a hard game," he said, "and a fool game, but 'it's up to me.' I'll take a chance!"

He hastily tied a handkerchief over the lower part of his face, and, taking the man's pistol in one hand and his own in the other, he crossed the hall and threw open the door.

"Hand's up, gents! and be quick about it!" he ordered in his professional tone.

The hands went up, and the new-comer uttered a smothered curse.

"None of that!" said Gratsy sternly. "You stand there and keep still! You other fellow, get into that closet quick, and shut the door!"

The man obeyed like a person in a dream. Gratsy turned the key.

"Now," said he to the new-comer, "shell out! Put the stuff on that table. I want that pocket-book," added he, tapping the other's coat.

"There is nothing except papers in that," said the new-comer in a low tone, glancing at the closet door. "I swear it."

"Put it on the table," commanded Gratsy, "I'll see about that. No! I don't want your watch. Now get into that closet," added Gratsy, opening the door, "and if you make a sound I'll make a sieve of that door. Come out, you other fellow!" The man came out and Gratsy closed the door and locked it. Then he took the handkerchief from his face, grinned broadly, and pointed to the table, at the same time saying out loud, with affected sternness, "Now it's your turn to dig up! Be quick about it!"

The man went rapidly over the contents of the pocket-book, took out a couple of papers with trembling hands, nodded, and put them in his pocket.

Gratsy took the pocket-book and the remaining papers and put them on the fire.

"I don't dare to carry them away, and if I leave them, he'll miss the others," he murmured.

The man grasped Gratsy's hand.

"You've saved me—and the child," whispered he.

Gratsy nodded. "I told you luck would change." Then, unlocking the closet door, he said aloud, "Get in there!"

The man went in with a swift look of gratitude, and Gratsy closed the door and locked it on both. "Now, you fellows," he called cheerfully through the keyhole, "you'd better not begin to break down this door till after I am out of the house, for if you do I'll come back and plunk you full of lead."

And with that Gratsy ran down the stairs three at a time, let himself out of the house, and walked quickly down the street.

As he turned the corner he looked back at the house and smiled.

"She is an almighty pretty little kid," said he.

# THE OTHER MAN

BY  
FREDERIC REDDALE



PHILADELPHIA  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY  
1902



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# LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER, 1902



## THE OTHER MAN

BY FREDERIC REDDALE

### I.

UNDER the scorching rays of an afternoon sun the limitless expanse of the African veldt lay shimmering and quivering in torrid heat.

All around there rose, fold upon fold, an interminable and maddening succession of low, rounded rises, clothed to their stony summits with short, coarse grass and purple karroo bushes, the reddish soil baked hard by the drought of the dry season.

Scarcely a sound broke the stillness of the wilderness; not a wing whirred; not an insect buzzed. There was no spoor or sign of game, large or small,—most of it had been killed off long ago. The grass bent languidly to the faint draught that came out of the north as from a furnace mouth.

All nature drooped and panted for nightfall; the desolation was profound; the silence was oppressive.

Out of the west, following the windings of a little kloof, there crept a lumbering, dusty, and dirty white-topped wagon, of the kind used by traders or hunters, innumerable creakings and groanings and shudderings testifying to many days' journeying with a "plentiful lack" of axle-grease.

Four poorly-conditioned oxen drew the cumbersome equipage. The lolling tongues of the beasts, their languid, dragging steps, and their lean condition told eloquently of hard travel and scanty forage.

By the side of the cattle shambled two Kaffir "boys," each armed with a long goad. In front of the team strode a white man, his naturally fair face tanned to a dusky red, his clothing soiled and travel-stained from many nights' sleeping out, his veldt-schoon in the last

stages of dilapidation. Resting in the hollow of his left arm lay a shining Winchester, the best-kept and smartest thing in the whole of his shabby outfit. For upon the rifle the little band of adventurers depended mainly for their subsistence from day to day. Game was scarce and shy; the wagon was none too plentifully stocked with the bare necessities of flour, sugar, and coffee; a poor shot might mean a supperless bed.

He was a giant in stature,—fully six feet two, with the build and brawn of the pioneer. In age he was on the better side of thirty. A great brown beard swept his chest, and there was a tawny mustache to match, while from under the front peak of his fore-and-aft pith helmet there gleamed a clean-cut profile and a pair of keen, Saxon blue eyes of the kind that are apt to be undimmed by fatigue or undaunted by disaster.

Slowly the little caravan plodded on, the Kaffirs continually urging the wearied beasts with throaty, clicking sounds, the white "baas" striding sturdily along, consulting a pocket-compass from time to time as the windings of the kloof brought the sun now upon one hand, and anon upon the other.

Evening was approaching; not more than a couple of hours' daylight remained; it was time to be thinking of a camp for the night.

After a more than usually heavy ascent, the oxen of their own accord stopped to breathe, the Kaffirs squatting listlessly under the wagon out of the sun. The white man, glancing back for a moment, strode without halting to the summit of the nearest kopje, and there stood shading his eyes and looking steadfastly northeast. Suddenly he was roused by a loud cry:

"Water, baas! I smell water!" shouted one of the "boys," pointing in the same direction.

Simultaneously the drooping oxen picked up their heads, and of their own accord started onward at a smarter pace. The "baas" descended and fell in at the rear of the wagon, for the Kaffir instinct is infallible, and water was surely not far away. This meant not only renewed life for the cattle, a camping-place, and probably some game for the pot, but also the goal of their journey.

Likewise success or another dismal failure!

Half a mile was covered in this fashion, the man in the helmet consulting a rude map as he stumbled through the slippery veldt grass, after which, with an exclamation of satisfaction, he called out:

"We must be nearly there, Joey!"

Scarcely had the words left his lips than the heavy wagon commenced to move more speedily down an easy decline, and the weary beasts broke into a shambling trot.

A sudden turn round the shoulder of a hill revealed the wider ex-

panse of a little valley, perhaps a half mile broad, through which meandered a thin ribbon of shallow water, bordered by a narrow expanse of pebbly beach that in time of flood would be entirely covered with a yellow, swirling torrent.

In a trice the wagon stopped, the oxen were unhitched and galloping towards the water, into the centre of which they waded knee-deep, drinking greedily of the precious fluid. This done, they proceeded to wallow in the stream, after which they turned their attention to the more succulent grass growing near by.

Although the near-by kopjes were casting long shadows eastward, there was yet more than an hour of daylight.

Methodically and silently the younger native proceeded to unpack the scanty camp utensils and build a fire, while Joey, taking a gun from the bed of the wagon, sneaked off up-stream in quest of an eland, a harte-beeste, or a klipspringer buck.

The white man, leaving all these details to his "boys," strode off in the contrary direction down-stream, apparently at random and as though he were likewise looking for game, until out of sight around a bend. Then his whole demeanor changed. He attentively studied the dried-up shore on either hand, crossing the exposed river beach diagonally from the farther margin of caked bluish clay to the strip of coarse gravel and pebbles that bordered the water's edge.

Apparently the indications were satisfactory. Bending nearly double, he eagerly scanned the patches of pebbles, scratching here and there with his fingers, and letting the stuff winnow through his hand.

Suddenly, with an ejaculation of pleasure and triumph, he dropped his weapon and began to pick up pebbles here and there. Curious, dirty-looking stones they were, grayish white and rusty, but having strange, fiery gleams in their depths.

With feverish haste he produced a stout canvas bag, holding perhaps a quart, tied with leathern thongs. Greedily he continued his quest, picking up stones apparently at hap-hazard, but really with the quick selection of the expert. Some of them were hardly bigger than a pea, many others were as large as a marble or a hazel-nut, a few even larger.

Now, it is a blessed peculiarity of precious stones, cut or uncut, rough or polished, set or unset, that a fortune may be contained in a very small compass. And although mere size does not always count in assessing the value of a stone, yet those which our prospector had gathered might be expected to be worth anywhere from a hundred to a thousand pounds apiece. For in his knocking about the diamond fields he had become something of a connoisseur, and in picking over this new field he had with quick decision selected only the finest specimens, albeit only in the rough.

The whole "claim," when properly exploited, would doubtless prove to be very rich, and of this claim he was of course the owner by right of discovery, in which the drastic mining laws of the colony would jealously protect him.

An hour sufficed to fill the bag, the mouth of which he quickly fastened and flung it on the sand. Then, raising his clenched fists towards the heavens, he cried in a voice hoarse with excitement and triumph:

"At last! At last!"

With a grim smile lifting the corners of his tawny mustache he gave the bag a kick and thus apostrophized its contents:

"There you are, my beauties! This is my claim, and I'm one of the richest men in South Africa!"

For that dirty canvas bag held twice a double handful of diamonds, and the claim would be worth no man could say how much. Richard Dysart's quest was ended; he had found a virgin deposit of those precious white stones, for which, not two hundred miles away, in Kimberley, an army of white men and Kaffir slaves were madly tearing out the bowels of the continent.

Dysart picked up the bag, walked to where he had thrown down his Winchester, and turned his face towards camp. A distant rifle-shot rang out at that instant and apprised him that Joey had probably brought down their supper.

"Confound the fellow!" he muttered. "I wish he hadn't fired the gun!"

The sun had disappeared below the hills to the westward, and in less than a quarter of an hour it would be dark.

Coming in sight of camp, he discovered Joey in the act of skinning and cutting up a young buck, while the other boy was tending a cheerful fire built of driftwood left high and dry on the river bank.

Flinging himself down by the fire, the precious bag by his side, Dysart removed his helmet, baring his white forehead to the cooling night-breeze, which was even now briskly fanning the fire.

As he sat there, plans for the future came trooping through his brain. Now he could go home to England. The weary years of wandering, hardship, and ill-luck were all behind him. He saw himself taking his proper place once more among his fellows, wealthy beyond the most sanguine dreams of ambition or of avarice. No more sleeping out on the veldt, frozen by night and roasted by day,—for your African desert, even within twenty degrees of the Equator, is as cold as Labrador between sunset and sunrise. There was a gentleman's estate, good society, and pleasures innumerable at the end of the journey!

And a wife, perhaps—the queenly Marcia Churchill.

They had laughed at him in Kimberley when he talked of a new

diamond country away off to the northeast, and no one had faith enough in his scheme, based on a story heard from an old Kaffir, to lend him a paltry hundred pounds for an outfit. Well, the laugh was his now! He would be a Diamond King!

Through all his visions of the past with its cruel hardships, and of the future with its golden triumphs, there floated a fair face,—a woman's face,—crowned with an aureole of dusky hair, framing a pair of steadfast gray eyes that could look a man through and through, and forever banish falsehood and guile.

But perhaps she had not waited! Ah, in that case—and with a sudden tightening of the chest Dysart half rose to his feet, showing himself full in the ruddy glare of the fire.

As if in answer to the cruel thought, from out of the darkness across the narrow stream there was an angry spat of flame, a sharp report, and with a groan Richard sank back as though lifeless, shot through the body!

A sound of hurried and scrambling footsteps, a sudden plashing in the shallow water, and then there appeared out of the darkness whence the shot had come the form of a man running swiftly. He made straight for the silent figure of his victim, grabbed the bag of diamonds lying by his side, and vanished in the blackness whence he had come.

A life-tragedy in the space of two hundred ticks of the watch!

The two Kaffir boys, startled by the shot, saw only the silent form of the "baas" and the swiftly moving apparition that seemed to swoop down upon them out of the African night.

With a simultaneous yell they dropped their tasks and fled into the surrounding blackness. Richard Dysart was left alone,—dying, perhaps dead,—alone on the veldt, treacherously and cruelly robbed of his hard-won treasure!

## II.

WHEN two men fall out who are closely allied by blood or by friendship the breach is apt to be all the more deadly and bitter than if they had been only mere acquaintances.

And when the same men quarrel over a woman, covertly or openly, beware of the consequences, for a very pretty feud is apt to ensue.

It was Richard Dysart's misfortune to be born the younger son in a family long in lineage but short in wealth. He was bred to the law, having hopes of family influence and preferment in that quarter, his own taste being for the army. But old Sir Arthur Dysart, his father, had his own way, and Rick religiously kept his terms and ate his dinners at the Temple.

The elder brother, also named Arthur,—there had always been a Sir Arthur Dysart since Charles Second's time,—was of a studious turn, being slight and dark in stature and complexion, presenting a

complete antithesis to his Berserk younger brother. In tastes and likings they were also at opposites. Arthur seldom shot over his father's preserves; Rick was never so happy as when he had a gun over his shoulder and a good dog at heel. Arthur loved books and flowers and music, and was something of a colorist; Rick almost hated the sight of a book, and esteemed a ride to hounds worth more than a library of Elzevirs, and the merry toot of the huntsman's horn prettier than a classic symphony.

But it must not be inferred that Arthur was by any means a milk-sop,—he was a type of the modern English gentleman, than whom there is none finer on God's footstool; and if his pursuits were of the more peaceful order, he could, nevertheless, be trusted to hold his own anywhere and with anybody.

Now, the Dysart acres were strictly entailed, and as a younger son Richard Dysart could not expect more than a modest inheritance. Old Sir Arthur had foreseen this, and managed to lay by a few hundreds which at his death he intended to bequeath to Rick to tide him over the briefless days that come to every budding barrister. Stella Dysart, the sister, was amply provided for, her mother's jointure having been settled upon her absolutely.

But the will, put off from day to day, was never made, and one morning the old Baronet came a cropper over his horse, was carried home with a broken neck, and a new Sir Arthur, tenth of his line, reigned at Denecroft.

The latter was perfectly cognizant of his father's intentions respecting his brother, and meant to scrupulously carry them out, when an unexpected obstacle occurred, to wit, a bitter and acrimonious quarrel betwixt the brothers.

Marcia Churchill was the woman in the case, daughter of old Squire Churchill, the reigning beauty of at least three counties, at this time in the heyday of her social triumphs.

Perhaps because Marcia Churchill and Stella Dysart were representatives of two distinct types of beauty they were pretty close friends. Marcia might have stood for one of DuMaurier's women, for she was tall and stately, patrician, and severely beautiful. Stella Dysart scarcely came up to her shoulder, being as petite and as pretty as a Dresden shepherdess.

The four young people had known one another from childhood, when they romped together in the woods of Denecroft or roamed over the daisy meadows of Gatewood, the Churchill property. As boys the two Dysarts vied with each other as to who should be Marcia's champion, and with characteristic feminine impartiality she showered her favors upon each in turn. Now it was Arthur's week, and again Richard would be her knight.

The rivalry continued, more quietly but fully as intense, after the brothers came back from Cambridge, but both of them feared to put the question of precedence to the test. Marcia went through two seasons scathless and apparently heart-free, so perhaps her mind was made up after all.

If Arthur Dysart had the advantage of the heirship on his side and of nearness to the Churchill estates while Richard was grinding away at his lawbooks in London, the latter had his own little compensations, for he saw the girl constantly during the season, and lost no occasion of quietly keeping himself to the fore. Richard divined somehow that Arthur would not propose while his father lived, and so was content to wait, hoping the while that his own ship would come into port.

Matters were at this stage of truce and tension when there came the news of Sir Arthur's death.

Richard went down for the funeral, and then it was discovered that there was no will. Immediately his position flashed upon him; he was absolutely dependent upon his brother's bounty, for naturally his allowance stopped with the demise of his father. It also dawned upon him that now Marcia would be called upon to make her decision, and that she would perhaps prefer a baronet *de facto* and *de jure* to a penniless young barrister with no law and few facts in his favor.

It is not surprising, then, that he felt very much like a modern Esau, and in no pleasant mood, when, on the third day after the funeral, as the brothers were at breakfast, the new Sir Arthur said, in his hesitating habit of speech:

"Er—er—Rick, if you're not going out this morning I should like a word with you."

Sir Arthur had what is called a bad manner; he was self-conscious and bashful to a degree; upon ordinary occasions he was apt to hesitate and falter and flounder, although at other times and upon topics where he was sure of his ground he could be terse and even epigrammatic.

Rick looked up from his letters, and, being "in the dumps," as he would have expressed it, merely grunted an assent.

Nothing more was said until the meal was ended. Then, leaning back in his leather chair and lighting a cigar,—Sir Arthur abhorred tobacco,—he said sulkily, sarcastically giving his brother his title,—

"Well, 'Sir Arthur,' what is it?"

It was not a very inviting opening. Yet it may be conceded that fate had certainly not been kind to Richard. At bottom he loved his brother, and in his heart he knew that Sir Arthur wanted to do the right thing. But a perverse humor held him that morning, and he would make no effort at complaisance or conciliation.



Sir Arthur flushed painfully at Rick's carelessly contemptuous tone. He rose and went to the window, where he stood in silence while the second-hand of the old clock ticked solemnly half-way round its dial.

"I—I—want to put things right, old man," he said at length, facing inward, towards Rick, who sat moodily smoking, his cigar tilted towards the ceiling.

"Do you? That's kind!" was the curt rejoinder.

The Baronet looked at his brother in mute surprise; the hot color flamed in his sallow face and as suddenly left it paler than its wont. He had never before seen Rick like this. But he controlled himself and went on, a little more fluently, as though the other had not spoken.

"Yes. I happen to know what father's intentions were about money matters, and I am prepared to carry them out to the letter."

"Did he tell you to do it?" inquired Rick laconically.

"You remember he never spoke after they carried him home," said Sir Arthur reproachfully, "but I knew from what he said to me at times that you were to be taken care of,—that you would have been provided for if there had been a will,—and I simply mean to act in his stead."

All this was certainly very fair and generous, and the Baronet looked expectantly at Richard for some signs of a relenting humor. But the perverse devil which clutched his heart-strings would permit no relaxation, and the only response was a monosyllabic and irritating,—

"Well?"

Sir Arthur's patience was giving way, and signs of the Dysart temper appeared in the shape of certain twitchings and indentations of the nostrils, yet he kept himself in hand wonderfully.

"There is not much ready cash, Rick,—you know there never has been," he went on, "but father set aside certain sums which you were to have at his death. I believe the amount is now something like a couple of thousand pounds, and this shall be paid in to your account as soon as the lawyers can arrange it."

"Thanks awfully," drawled Richard. He knew in his heart that Sir Arthur was acting nobly and generously, even as he would have acted had their positions been reversed. Yet back of it all was the knowledge, common to each, that a woman had come between them, that they both loved her, and that only one of them could possess her. This hardened both of them.

But Richard had begun the interview badly, and the Dysart pride, which was fully as bad as the Dysart temper, would not let him descend from his lofty perch. And although he knew he was wronging his brother grievously by the suspicion, the fiend within compelled him to continue,—

"And so you wash your hands of me, and I can go to the devil with your two thousand pounds!"

Sir Arthur's patience was exhausted, and even his affection could not withstand this last thrust, coupled with what had gone before. Still, as Rick waxed hot, he grew cool.

"It is a matter of complete indifference to me what you do or where you go," he retorted icily. "I have done my duty. More you could not ask; more you shall not have. I wish you good-morning and a better temper!"

With these words he turned away, and was for stepping out on the lawn. But in a couple of strides Richard was by his side, a strong hand on his shoulder, so as to swing him round, and they stood face to face, one as hot as molten iron, the other as cool as chilled steel.

"All very fine!" Rick sneered. "Now that you've got the title, I suppose you think you'll capture the lady besides. But don't be too sure!"

The caddish thrust told. The Baronet quivered, and then steadied himself as does a good fencer when his enemy's foil touches a vital spot. His eyes blazed, yet still he kept admirable outward control of his temper. With cool and cutting irony he rejoined:

"If the lady gets you, I shall be the first to congratulate her on her exceedingly wise choice. She might do better. I do not see how she could do worse!"

Then he passed out to the grass, paused, and again turned to where Richard stood, speechless with rage and chagrin, saying as though to a mere caller:

"I will order the gig round in an hour. There is a train at twelve-forty. I would not hurry you, or hint that I am the master here, but doubtless you will be glad to leave Denecroft."

And with a slight bow he passed round a turret angle, and Richard saw him no more. Thus the brothers parted.

Half mad and blind with rage, mortification, and self-condemnation, Richard went to his room, tossed his traps into his bag, left directions for the gig to bring it after him, and then started to walk to the station.

Long before he reached London his better self regained the ascendancy, and bitterly he rued the wrong he had done his brother and the mess he had made of things. Pride forbade him to go back and apologize as he ought. Not a penny of that cursed money would he touch. He would leave England and carve out an independent fortune for himself.

But first he must see Marcia and find out if she too were among the things he had that day lost.

Fortunately he found her "at home" and alone. It was the first

time they had met since his father's death, and as she rose and came forward with outstretched hands to welcome him she said,—

"I knew you would come to me first upon your return."

Her words and her manner fell like balm on his storm-tossed and angry spirit, and something like a sob had to be gulped down before he could speak, and even then his eyes were suspiciously moist.

"Yes," he said, leading her to a seat, "and even now I am come to say good-by. I am leaving England," he continued in answer to the mute and appealing inquiry in her eyes.

"Leaving England!" she replied in deep contralto tones; "and why?"

"To make my fortune," he answered as jauntily as he could.

"But surely——" she began, when he took the words out of her mouth.

"Oh, yes, Sir Arthur has done the handsome thing so far as money is concerned, but we've had a beastly row, and I can't touch a penny. So I'm going away."

"A quarrel with Sir Arthur—going away!" she repeated dully, with dilated eyes.

He nodded. "But it was all my fault; I acted like a cad. I was mad with doubt and uncertainty. Arthur behaved like a Dysart,—practically ordered me off the premises, just as I'd have done if he had cheeked me. I've only myself to thank," he concluded gloomily.

Richard was very, very young, or he would have known that one of the surest ways to a woman's heart is self-depreciation, especially when that woman is in love with a man. Because then she has the satisfaction of proving, among other things, that her idol is not made of clay.

For Rick it was a relief thus to make confession, to look into her troubled eyes, their depths stirred for him, as he felt, and to divine that she at least would not be indifferent to his going.

Marcia laid her cool palm on his hot hand, and unthinkingly left it there. In a moment he had covered it with the other, and held it imprisoned.

"I own I was in the wrong," he reiterated. "But I was wild at the thought that perhaps I had lost everything. Marcia," he went on, "before I go you must choose once for all between the rich Baronet and the poor Barrister. You know what I mean, dear!"

The warm color rose to her cheeks; her bosom palpitated; her breath came and went in fitful unison with its throbbings. He held her hands insistently, nor did she strive to withdraw them. Raising her eyes to his she said, while a half smile dimpled her mouth:

"You foolish boy! the choice was made years and years ago, and—it isn't the Baronet!" she faltered, as her head sunk on his shoulder.

"My darling!" he exclaimed, as he strained her yielding form to him, "do you mean it?"

"Yes," she sighed blissfully; "it seems as if I had always loved you, Rick!"

"And will you wait for me, Marcia?" he queried.

"For ever and always!" she rejoined, gladly and proudly, smiling at him through her happy tears.

And thus they parted, plighting their troth. In a week Richard Dysart sailed for Cape Town, to try his luck in the diamond diggings.

## III.

It is a far cry from the African veldt, with its tragedies and its strenuous struggles for Nature's crude wealth, to the neighborhood of the most respectable Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, yet under her beneficent shadow there are equally fierce strivings for financial prestige and power.

In a richly and newly furnished suite of offices in Mincing Lane there sat one morning a man whose word and fiat had in less than a year become a power in the "city." Upon the outer door was emblazoned in severely plain script the name "Rossiter Kane."

His outer office was besieged, even as early as ten o'clock, by a motley crowd,—stock-brokers, promoters, solid men, with here and there a titled name, speculators, clerks, and messengers. The air teemed with suppressed excitement, and rumors of vast deals, enterprises of monetary pith and moment, flew from lips to eager ears. The weekly press printed the wildest gossip concerning the man, and even in the West End clubs one caught his name tossed and bandied about from group to group.

"Most astonishing personality," said the veteran stock-jobber, Marmaduke Ashby, to some of his cronies. "How much is he worth? Ask me something easy, dear boy; I know he cleared a hundred thousand in Tires alone. Everything he touches turns out well. Kane's lead is good enough for me!"

"Who is he, and where did he come from?" queried another, not so well informed.

"Says he's an American," was the answer, "but I know he came here direct from South Africa. He must have been in the diamond fields, for he marketed some of the finest uncut stones ever seen in Europe."

"Yes, and that makes me think of another funny thing," broke in young Lord Appleby; "he doesn't seem to know any of the African gang. Wonder if he was ever an I. D. B.?" these cabalistic letters standing for "illicit diamond buyer."

"Rot!" rejoined Ashby. "He doesn't belong to the Barney Bar-

nato crowd, that's all. Everything he does is well done, and there's none of their heathenish display and barbaric 'push' about Kane. He's a gentleman at heart, whatever his origin, or I miss my guess. Why, he goes everywhere, and you'll find his name on the subscription list of every hospital and charity in London."

"I'd like to know how he does it," sighed young Appleby, who took an occasional flyer in stocks.

"Why don't you ask him?" said one of the group jokingly.

"I did," was the naïve reply. "Says he, 'I've starved, I've tramped, I've almost begged, but things came my way at last!'"

"Sort of Orphic revelation, that," laughed Renniss. "Do you suppose it can be true?"

"Shouldn't wonder a bit; I'll wager a hat that those cool eyes and that smooth face have looked on some rare doings."

When Kane threw open his Park Lane mansion all the world and his wife flocked thither, no less to be seen than to see this enigma of a man who had literally captured the realms of fashion and finance single-handed.

As he stood to receive his guests, with polished ease, as though to the manner born, one saw a man five feet ten inches in height, of rather spare yet hardy frame, delicately chiselled features cleanly shaven as an abbé's, with hair closely cropped, slightly tinged with gray at the temples, and a pair of blue eyes that had a curious trick of dilating and contracting, of darkening and lightening, according to the mood that possessed their owner. In age he might be anywhere from thirty-five to fifty.

On being presented to his host old General Scarlett remarked,—

"They tell me you have been quite a traveller, Mr. Kane?"

"I have seen quite a little of the world," was the smiling reply, "but very few know the ups and downs that have fallen to my lot. I was born in America, but my father I never saw to remember him. I was a waif, an outcast of the Sierra camps, adopted by an old miner who had nothing to give me but his name and surname."

But for the interruption occasioned by the arrival of more guests Kane might have added that he had been a veritable Jack-of-all-trades,—teamster, mail-carrier, prospector, miner, and gambler in that free-for-all country known as "the West." Drifting around the world to South Africa, he successively clerked in an up-country store, dealt faro, and played the piano in dance-houses in Kimberley and Johannesburg, where he had also picked up some knowledge of the diamond country.

"How had he come by his wealth in diamonds?" Found them, like many another man, of course. Success had come to him very suddenly,—a "strike," he called it,—and then changed the subject.

Men sought his society for the market "tips" he could give; women liked him for the air of quiet power which pervaded every word and action.

Said one titled dame to some intimates over their afternoon tea:

"My dears, his house is a marvel of chaste elegance, and his weekly dinners are a dream! In his waking hours he is surrounded by crowds of clients, guests, or dependents. How he stands the pace is more than I can fathom, yet he is always smiling and debonair, cool and collected, and never at a loss for a timely word or a suitable remark. De Lacy says he seems equally at home with dowagers or débutantes, with dukes or cab-drivers, with money-kings or crossing-sweepers."

And it was true, every word of it.

One episode, widely reported at the time, throws a flood of light upon the character of this much-canvassed personage.

Kane had manipulated a big corner in "Cochineal Consols," one of the fancy stocks of the day, and had the market at his mercy. Among the "shorts" was a small speculator named Ackerly, who on more than one occasion had run foul of Kane and his schemes. When "settling day" came, Ackerly stood to be ruined if Kane chose to force matters. It so happened that his daughter, Rose Ackerly, who had been studying music, was to make her professional début the same night at Queen's Hall.

Upon the eventful morning that would seal her father's fate she drove up to Kane's office and besought an interview with the great man. Her eyes suffused with tears, and her voice trembling with emotion, she begged the financier's indulgence for her father.

"Women should not meddle with such matters," was Kane's curt and stern comment. Then,—

"Does your father know of this visit?"

"No, oh, no, sir," was the tremulous but evidently truthful reply.

"You must understand, I am sure, Miss Ackerly, that it is merely the fortune of war, and ordinary usage in the city is no respecter of persons," said Kane quietly, and then with a sudden change of manner and a genial smile he went on: "But such a sweet supplicant must not go unrewarded. You may leave it to me,—your father shall not suffer."

He stopped her thanks with a wave of the hand, and then inquired:

"And how is your recital coming along? Can I be of any assistance there?"

"If you only would!" the girl began timidly. "One needs so much influence in London, you know."

"Say no more," said Kane quickly. "I see how it is; you shall have a good house."

Hardly was she gone, a new light shining in her pretty eyes, than Kane despatched a messenger for fifty guineas' worth of seats, and put his secretary at work addressing notes to the more influential of his friends, begging their acceptance of the tickets enclosed, and bespeaking their attendance at the musicale. As a consequence, Rose Ackerly's fortune was made.

"I can be hard as nails," Kane said when taxed with soft-heartedness anent this performance; "Ackerly's a cur and richly deserved to be made to squeal; but every man should know how to temper justice with mercy. I've been in too many tight places myself not to realize how it feels to be jumped on!"

So there you have the unique personality, outward and inward, then newly launched in the cream of English society.

No smart function was complete without him, and in response to his own lavish entertaining in town during the season, he was deluged with invitations to visit some of the most exclusive country houses in England for the shooting season. Being a bachelor, "with not a relative in the world," as he said, he was naturally regarded as a big fish in the matrimonial swim, and might have married a titled beauty before the summer was over, thus reversing the accepted Anglo-American procedure in recent years.

In course of time Rossiter Kane's round of autumn visits brought him to Denecroft.

Three years had passed from the date of Richard Dysart's self-expatriation. Time had brought no outward change in the lives of those hitherto concerned in this story. Stella Dysart was still reigning mistress at Denecroft. Sir Arthur, as may be imagined, lost no time in putting the all-important question to Marcia Churchill, only to be met with a gracious but kindly refusal and the tidings that his brother had been beforehand. Thenceforward he remained single, nor showed any signs of transferring his affections elsewhere.

Marcia kept her troth, although little had been heard from the absent lad. A brace of letters in the first six months; then a long silence; finally a single impassioned appeal, enclosing his picture, for which she had asked, reiterating his undying love, begging her to wait for him, hinting at all sorts of bad luck, but intimating that a certain venture then impending would make or break him. After that, silence and suspense.

True to his word, Sir Arthur paid in two thousand pounds to Richard's credit at the family bankers', but it was never drawn against. Whatever he was doing, the boy was clearly determined to sink or swim by his own unaided efforts. The Baronet, on his part, felt too deeply wounded to write or make any overtures at a reconciliation.

So Marcia waited, her beauty enhanced and spiritualized by her faithful love and daily hope.

"He will come back," she said for the hundredth time.

"Of course he will," echoed Stella, for Rick had been her favorite brother, and in these latter days she and Marcia learned to love each other as sisters, and jokingly vowed to live together as old maids to the end of the chapter.

Rossiter Kane had met Stella Dysart in town, likewise Marcia Churchill. With the former he appeared to be at once *empressé*, and it would be hard to say which of the two girls liked him best. With Sir Arthur too he got along famously, for his was the happy faculty of adapting himself, chameleon-like, to the surroundings or the person with which or with whom he happened for the moment to be brought in contact. He could interest himself in Sir Arthur's old manuscripts and early Italian canzonets, although, as he quietly confessed to Stella, he had no personal appreciation of their beauty or their value.

"I started too late in life, Miss Dysart," he would say, "and what I need most is some kind person to take pity on me, become my mentor, and lick me into shape, as we used to say out West."

It needed no oracle to interpret the inference. Rossiter Kane, had the nomination been left to him, would have chosen his mentor then and there, and the post would have possessed a life tenure.

Evidently Kane's time had come at last, and he was hard hit. He had escaped the meshes and the machinations of managing *mammas* all through the season, only to surrender at discretion to this motherless girl whose thoughts were more for her absent brother than for the chances of picking up a husband.

And then, of course, she had not known him very long or very well. But this was a matter that could readily be remedied by a master-mind, and Kane took care that Stella Dysart should have plenty of chance to become acquainted with him in the two weeks he spent under the Baronet's roof.

Day after day, although a splendid shot, he would decline to go out with the other guns; morning after morning found him at her side in long rides through the Dorset woods and uplands; night after night in the drawing-room he strove, like Othello, to awaken her interest by recounting strange tales of adventure by flood and field of which, it is but fair to say, he was only occasionally the hero.

Nor were his efforts wholly in vain. Stella Dysart was half-won when her curiosity was excited and her expectation aroused by the many moods of this extraordinary man.

From the instant of their first meeting, Rossiter Kane determined to win her for his wife. Thenceforward life had but one object for him, and if ever a pure and unsullied affection for a spotless maiden



could redeem a man and lift him out of his lurid past, here was certainly such an occasion.

Akin to every other man born of woman, Rossiter Kane was a compound of good and evil, with the evil predominating at times, not from love thereof, but from force of circumstances.

A modern satirist has registered the truthful saying that it is easy to be virtuous on five thousand a year. Kane the pariah, the outcast, forced to live by his wits, took life at a vastly different viewpoint from Kane the millionaire. A change of fortune killed off the weeds, and gave the innate and dormant good in his character a chance to fructify.

If he could only have blotted out certain cruel memories of stratagems and spoils his present outlook would have been serene and full of promise.

#### IV.

OVER the Karroo Desert the stars paled and the dawn broke swiftly. From every kloof there floated pale wisps and wreaths of silver mist, out of which the flat-topped kopjes rose like islands in a ghostly sea. The surface of the Mooi River was hidden by a thicker pall of this same fog.

With the coming of the sun there came a merry breeze, which swept kloof and kopje clean as with an invisible besom, and anon the waters of the little river sparkled and rippled in the glorious sunshine of a new day.

But it was yet cold,—horribly cold,—reminding one of the hill country of North India. Gradually the sun gets in his work, and the chill of the air gives place to a genial warmth which before the meridian will turn to an oppressive heat.

An antelope and its mate came trotting to the water's edge to drink, but ere quenching their thirst sniffed the air suspiciously, and then galloped off down-stream, their hard little hoofs rattling like castanets over the stones. A hundred yards off the wild creatures halted and gazed timorously back.

On the bank, by the gray embers of a dead fire, lay a ghastly thing, huddled shapelessly in a heap, the clothing soiled and dusty, a great reddish-brown stain on the khaki jacket, the ends of a waving brown beard matted and clotted with the blood which had dripped and oozed and discolored the light, clayey soil.

Richard Dysart! Alive?—perhaps. Dead?—if not, he surely soon will be unless succor comes.

Down the little kloof through which the old wagon had creaked so cheerfully the day before there stole like shadows two dusky Kaffir boys. Timidly they gained its shelter, and cautiously peered through the spokes of the heavy wheels.

They point eagerly at the recumbent figure, and chatter to each other in their queer, clicking speech. Then, looking fearfully around and over their shoulders, they advance, and Joey drops on his knees beside his master.

"Baas, Baas!" he whines, and with thumb and forefinger raises an eyelid to see if there be left any life.

The blue and parched lips move, and there is a whispered moan:

"Water! Water!"

The other boy looks on stupidly and stolidly, but Joey dashes to the wagon for a tin cup, which he fills at the stream, and raising the head of the sorely wounded man, manages to tilt some of the blessed liquid down his throat.

Catching sight of the neck of a flask protruding from the sufferer's pocket, Joey sends some brandy chasing after the water, and the vivifying effect of the cordial is almost magical.

Dysart opened his eyes, drew a few shuddering breaths, and then managed to sit up, supporting himself with one hand while he pressed the other to his wounded side.

At sight of the blood-stained jacket and the dark pool which discolored the ground there were more excited Kaffir clicks, while the poor, faithful, half-famished blacks watched their master anxiously.

Slowly and painfully the details of the tragedy came back to his throbbing and fever-parched brain. His gaze sought the ground on either hand, then he groaned:

"Robbed! The damned hound!"

Reaching out his hand for the precious flask, he took another gulp of its contents, and then made as if he would rise, but fell back, helpless as a child. His limbs were cramped and stiff with the night's exposure to a freezing temperature, and he was, besides, awfully weak from loss of blood.

But Dysart knew what must be done if he would save his life, and so he whispered,—

"Strip me, Joey."

Tenderly as women the boys did his bidding. Slowly and amid many smothered exclamations of pain they got his belt and jacket off; then his heavy flannel shirt, and a silk undershirt,—the last refusing to budge until all around the wound had been well wetted. Then was disclosed an angry red puncture just below and a little to the left of the right armpit. There was a larger and more jagged wound at the back, where the heavy-calibre bullet had ploughed its exit, lodging between the flesh and the clothing, whence it dropped to the ground as the last garment was removed.

Joey picked it up with a click and a grin of astonishment and handed it to Richard, who coolly slid it into his trousers-pocket. Under

his directions the wound was washed clean, and then carefully bandaged with the silk shirt torn into strips.

By this time the warming sun had done its genial work, and Dysart's legs were thawed out. So, by dint of both boys bracing themselves and tugging on his sound arm he managed to stagger to his feet and totter to the wagon, where, after much boosting and groaning on their part and his, he was made fairly comfortable on the heavy mattress which covered the bed of the conveyance. Then the wounded man collapsed.

The days ran into weeks, and the weeks mounted into months before the lonely adventurer began to mend. Fever wasted him to a skeleton; malaria sapped his vitality. Help there was none within a hundred miles; he could not stand the jolting of the wagon, and in his lucid moments he sternly vetoed Joey's offers to go for help. He knew what that would mean,—a rush of strangers to his claim.

So there, on the banks of the Mooi River, he fought his second fight with death, tended and nursed only by his faithful Kaffirs,—and won out at last!

All through those weary weeks, in the intervals of delirium and the tedium of convalescence, he planned and plotted vengeance on the miscreant who had robbed him. He would chase him round the world and back again if need be! Daily and hourly he looked for a rush of diamond-seekers to the new field. That they did not come proved that the unknown robber must have kept his own counsel, and was doubtless far enough away enjoying the fruits of his unholy spoil.

But there were enough shining stones left on the beach to make another fortune,—several fortunes, in fact,—and Dysart was still a rich man.

The first thing was to get to the coast, and easily divining that the criminal would make for the nearest seaport rather than for Kimberley or Pretoria, Richard determined to strike for Ladysmith, at that time the nearest town whence ran the railroad for Durban.

It was on a bright morning late in the South African spring when the word was given to inspan and trek once more, to the huge delight of Joey and his brother. The oxen had waxed fat over their long idleness, and good speed might be looked for.

The little party reached Ladysmith without mishap further than the loss of two of the cattle from drinking "red water." There Dysart disposed of some of his smallest stones, so as not to excite too much inquiry, suitably rewarded Joey and the other boy with a handful of yellow sovereigns apiece, made them a present of a new wagon and a dozen oxen, entered and proved his claim to the new field on the Mooi, replenished his wardrobe, got a shave, a haircut, and a bath, and then was ready to turn amateur detective.

He stumbled on his first clew by accident.

"A middlin' fine passel o' stones, Bister Dysart," said one of the dealers, a little Houndsditch Jew named Moses Plish, to whom he sold a small part of his find, after the purchase was concluded. "There vas another gent 'ere avile ago vith jest sich a lot; in a steamin' 'urry 'e was too!"

"Indeed?" said Richard, as nonchalantly as possible, keeping his eyes averted lest old Plish should espy their angry gleam.

"Yessir; a cool an' 'aughty customer 'e was! 'Ow much for the lot,' sezze, 'an' no qvestions arsed?' I 'ad done a leetle business vith 'im afore, an' I knowed 'is vays!"

"That's curious," said Richard. "I wonder if I have ever met your man? I don't mind telling you, Plish, that I've located and proved a new claim, and I supposed I was first on the ground. But you can never be sure. What did you say his name was?"

"I didn't sy, Bister Dysart," said Plish, with a cunning grin, "'cos I never 'eard it,—leastways 'is genooine nyme; ven I see 'im afore, a matter o' two or three years back, 'e useter play the pianner in a dance-'ouse in Durban."

"H-m-m," mused Dysart, drumming on the dirty table. "What was this chum like, Plish?"

"Tall an' thin, sorter grizzly 'air, with vite 'ands and long fingers like a voman's. But all this 'ere's strickly confidenshul an' atween ourselves, Bister Dysart, like as vun gent to another."

"Oh, certainly," assented Richard, quietly pocketing the invidiously impudent classification. "It doesn't really matter, you know. Thought I might know the beggar," and he rose to go.

"'Ere's somethin' 'e left be'ind 'im, sir," said Plish, who had been rummaging in a drawer, displaying a dirty canvas bag.

Rick seized it and went to the open door to examine it.

Sure enough, it was the canvas bag of which he had been looted on the bank of the Mooi! Turning again to the Jew, he inquired as carelessly as possible,—

"You don't mean to tell me he had this full of stones?"

"Oh, no, Bister Dysart, not by no manner o' means; I only saw abart a 'andful," was the reply.

"I'll keep this bag, Plish, if you've no objections," said Richard, stowing it away carefully.

"Don't bention it, Bister Dysart, sir," was the affable reply.

"One more question, Plish, and I'm done," said Richard. "Which way was your friend travelling, do you suppose?" He had risen, and stood carelessly flicking his boot with his riding-whip, yet much depended upon the reply he should receive.

"I 'appen to know 'e vent 'round to Cape Town by the first

steamer," said Plish. "But all this is strickly pers'nal an' privit, Bister Dysart, sir," he whined, for something in Richard's manner told him he had been talking too much.

"Quite so," was the terse answer, and with a parting nod off he swung down the wide and sunny street.

A week later he landed in Cape Town, where, in the process of forming a company to work the new claim, and arranging for the shipment to London and the insurance of the remainder of his stones, he was able to make a few cautious and casual inquiries about the man of whom he was in search. Not much could be gleaned, yet enough to convince him that the trail led in the direction he was himself most anxious to pursue,—namely, to England.

He left Cape Town nine months and more behind the other. For clues he possessed a rather hazy personal description which might or might not be trustworthy, a dirty canvas bag, and a 44-calibre bullet.

On board the steamer running around from Durban to Cape Town Richard Dysart still further added to his stock of information.

He was accosted on deck one morning by a certain Sergeant Cupples, one of the special force detailed to patrol in plain clothes the various steamship lines on the watch for contraband diamonds and smugglers thereof.

To his surprise, he learned that his own movements since arriving at Ladysmith were perfectly well known, and this led to some confidential talk concerning the devious ways of the I. D. B., which proved especially interesting to our friend.

"What moonshining is to the Southern States of America, what counterfeiting is at home and abroad, what the slave-trade was a few years ago, so is the present day illicit trade in diamonds in South Africa," said Cupples. "In the estimation of legitimate mine-owners and traders it may be set down as 'the sum of all villainies.' Despite the utmost vigilance of the Cape Police and an army of secret agents, stones are annually smuggled out of the country to the tune of thousands of pounds."

"How can the authorities manage to cover such a vast field with any degree of success?" inquired Rick.

"Well, you sec, the camps and productive fields are all known, mapped, and located. These outlets are watched, and their output is pretty accurately known from month to month. So also with the towns inland, and the coastwise cities like Durban, Delagoa Bay, Port Elizabeth, and Cape Town itself. The 'fences' are also known and kept under close surveillance, and there is one of our men on every outgoing steamer."

Dysart nodded; much of this was already familiar to him.

"But suppose a new field is discovered,—a man might become legitimately possessed of stones in that way?" he ventured.

"You are referring to your own case," said the police-agent with a smile; and then, in answer to the other's mute query: "We know all about you, Mr. Dysart. In the first place, you declared and proved your claim according to law; in the second place, Moses Plish 'gave you away' before you'd been out of his place an hour!"

"The devil he did!" exclaimed Richard. "I wonder if he did as much for my predecessor?"

Sergeant Cupples looked at him narrowly from under the peak of his steamer cap, took a few turns along the deck, and then said quietly:

"I'm on that case myself. Better let me have the whole story, Mr. Dysart. Being a mine-owner, you are as much interested in this matter as I am."

"And a good deal more," said Richard quietly. So, in the seclusion of a little nine-by-twelve stateroom on the Lanark Castle, the story of the grim tragedy on the Mooi River was for the first time told to the ear of a white man.

At its conclusion:

"We can run him down, Mr. Dysart,—that's certain. But whether we can hold him is another matter. You can charge highway robbery with intent to kill, and it's twenty years in Portland Prison if he's convicted. But I question whether the loot would come under the statute of illicit diamonds, because at the time of the seizure the claim had not been entered and proved."

"That's quite to my liking," exclaimed Richard, who had begun to fear that his private vengeance might be balked. "It's a personal matter between him and me, and I'd like to deal with the rascal myself in my own way. You have no clew as to his identity?"

"Not a particle beyond the personal description of old Plish," was the regretful reply.

## V.

IN due time Rossiter Kane attained the height of his ambition, and became a landed proprietor in a country where the possession of a few acres is the patent of solidity and gentility, and the "Open, sesame" to sundry other good things.

A charming little estate in Hampshire, consisting of park and woodland, carved out of a corner of the New Forest, with a dainty old house built by Vanbrugh, was on the market, and he promptly secured it. Not the least of its attractions lay in the fact that, although in another county, it was within riding or driving distance of both Denecroft and Gatewood. "The Cedars" was its name, and to celebrate his new ownership Kane determined to give a "pheasant ball" in his accus-

tomed lavish manner of entertaining. With the event itself we have not much concern, but it brought certain matters to a crisis, as he intended it should.

Other things fell out not so entirely to his liking.

On a bright autumn morning Kane rode over to Denecroft, ostensibly to announce the forthcoming function in person, and inquired for Miss Dysart.

"This is very kind of you, Mr. Kane," said Stella, after his salutations were made and the object of his call announced.

He bowed his acknowledgments over the little hand, and at her bidding seated himself near by.

"I trust your brother is well?" he inquired.

She started. "Oh, Sir Arthur, you mean? Yes, he is as usual, thank you. When you said 'my brother' it took me by surprise for a moment; all this morning I have been thinking of my poor brother Richard."

"I think I understand," he said simply, eyes and voice full of sympathy.

"We have had no news of him for more than a year," she went on. "Mr. Kane, report says you know South Africa like a book; is it possible you could have met Rick?"

There was a wealth of yearning in her tones, such as Kane would have liked to see evoked on his own account.

"South Africa is a wide country, Miss Dysart," he rejoined. "Where was your brother when you last heard from him?"

"At Kimberley, I think."

"Ah! I suppose he went by his own name?" he ventured, and then, in answer to her glance of surprise, implying that no Dysart would stoop to travel under an alias, "because, you know, lots of new chums out there do drop their civilized patronymics, and no one thinks the worse of them in consequence."

"I don't know, I am sure," she replied doubtfully. "Rick never said anything about it."

"You may be certain that if I had ever heard your name out there, Miss Dysart, recent events would prove an undoubted reminder. But I am morally sure I never met your brother. Tell me all you care to,—I may be able to help you."

And thus invited, she briefly outlined for him the story of Rick's exile.

"It's a common enough story," said Kane. "Hundreds of young Englishmen leave the old country with no better excuse and no better prospects than he had, and after a few ups and downs become successful in one of a dozen ways open to men of courage and conviction. Take my own case," he concluded, smiling.

Her looks brightened, and his cheery words seemed to give her renewed confidence.

"Could you show me his picture?" he continued. "I never forget a face, and if we have ever met I can tell you in an instant."

"The only photograph I have was taken long before Rick left England, and I am afraid it would not assist your memory, Mr. Kane. But Miss Churchill has one which was done in South Africa less than two years ago, I should think."

"The very thing!" he exclaimed. "I purpose riding over to Gatewood, and will let you know the result."

"I—we—shall be so grateful to you, Mr. Kane, for any news or encouragement. When I sit here talking to you about the Cape it seems as if Rick were not so far away after all!" And she flashed him a dazzling smile through the tears which would flow all unbidden at the memory of the exile.

Kane rose as if to go, and Stella rose too. He had started for Denecroft that morning of set purpose to propose to the girl, but the conversation was taking a turn that he had not foreseen, and one which might or might not form a propitious prelude to what he wanted to say.

However, he was not the man to shrink from a slight obstacle, and to leave Denecroft without having spoken his rede would seem too much like a repulse or a defeat. So he determined to make it now or never. But he must not be too precipitate.

Despite his supreme confidence in his lucky star, Kane knew perfectly well that in thus raising his eyes to an alliance with an English girl of rank and fortune the chances were dead against him. A year ago her world did not know his name. Had they met two years ago he shuddered to think of what their relative positions would have been. He knew very well that it was his wealth alone which now enabled him to meet her on even terms, and he realized clearly that unless he could impress his personality and his manhood upon her, mere money would profit him nothing.

Could he make himself indispensable to this gentle and high-born English maiden,—he, the erstwhile adventurer and outcast? At least, he could try! It should be the fight of his life! If the way to Stella's heart lay through her regard for the absent and long-lost brother, why, Rossiter Kane could be counted upon to play the sympathetic part desired. So he deftly took up his cue, saying in answer to her last words:

"To say that I am highly honored by your confidence but faintly expresses my sentiments, Miss Dysart. Indeed, I am glad you confided in me, for it shows you do not regard me as an utter outlander."



He paused, and her eyes met his ardent gaze. In that moment, in that glance, the whole of life was changed for these two.

With woman-like intuition she divined his drift, and although up to that time she had not distinctly realized his passionate admiration of her, or that she was being wooed, the instant's discovery of it was, if anything, pleasurable rather than otherwise. But she did not—could not—reply, and Kane took up the burden of his tale.

"Forgive me if I speak of myself," he said. "My life has been a rough one, and I have had neither the leisure nor the desire for the society of women,—until lately,—until I met you. Then newer and sweeter hopes arose. From the very first moment I loved you with all the strength of my manhood, and I determined, if I might, to win the priceless treasure of your love."

He advanced a pace, and took her unresisting hand in his. It was characteristic of the man that at this crisis he indulged in no special pleading, but went straight to the point.

Stella's golden head sunk lower and lower, until he could not see her face. But the little hand was not withdrawn. Bending over her he went on:

"Miss Dysart," he said, "all that I am, all that I hope to be, all that I have, I lay at your feet, but they cannot outweigh my love. Will you be my wife?"

There was no answer. She stood before him, nervously clasping and unclasping her fingers, her head with its aureole of sunny hair so drooped that her face was hid from view. Kane could not see her eyes,—a glance into their depths would perchance have apprised him how to proceed, but he was forced to "go it blind," as he would have said concerning some mere business venture.

"I know it looks like cool presumption for a man from nowhere in particular to aspire so high, Miss Dysart," he went on in a deep undertone that she alone could hear. "The prisoner throws himself unreservedly upon the mercy of his judge. I'm unworthy of you in every sense," he said, with that complete self-abasement which the strongest and most unscrupulous men feel when in the presence of a pure and innocent woman, "save that I love you, and you alone. I never said that to a girl before," he continued, as if the thought had just occurred to him that perhaps she might be hesitating for fear that a man of his years was not as heart-free as he was foot-free. "Cannot you give me a little hope?" he urged. "Will you marry me, Stella?"

Stella Dysart was no mere chit of a girl in her teens. Men had made love to her, and even proposed to her, before this, but never the right man. From the first she had been interested in Rossiter Kane. There was a strenuous air about him, the quiet insistence of a "mas-

terful man" who will carry his point in the end, that appeals to every masterless woman.

Now that the question of questions was put and demanded an answer, she was surprised to find that what she had deemed mere friendly feeling and interest really deserved a much nearer and dearer name. She found in her own heart a smoldering response to his appeal which leaped into flame at his behest.

Quietly he waited for her answer. But still the little head was bent. He drew her to him, and caressingly tilted her chin so that she must perforce lift her eyes to his.

Her face was suffused with rosy color, and her eyelashes were wet, but surely they were happy tears, and it was with smiling lips that she whispered as she nestled to his side,—

"If you wish it,—yes!"

"Wish it! Oh my darling, my queen!" he exclaimed, and his lips met hers in love's first sweet caress.

He was in no haste to be gone now, but led her to a tête-à-tête and took his place beside her.

"I am the happiest man in England," he said fervidly, devouring her with his eyes. For answer she breathed a happy sigh.

"Sir Arthur must be told, I suppose," he said tentatively, after an interchange of sweet confessions and confidences.

"Oh, not yet, please," she pleaded. "Not for a few days. I feel so selfish, enjoying all this happiness, when at this moment poor Rick may be in trouble or in danger!"

"Confound your Rick!" was Kane's inward objurgation, but outwardly he was all sympathy and interest.

"We must find him," he said, in quietly confident tones. "He is my brother now, you know." A rosy blush flooded face and forehead at these words, but timidly seeking his hand she exclaimed:

"If you want to make me sincerely happy and leave no cloud between us, you will find my brother! Then you may speak to Sir Arthur as soon as you like!" nodding her head vivaciously.

"It is a bargain," Kane returned, and with a farewell caress he took his leave, elated, happy, triumphant, a better man in thought and intention than he had ever been before.

Mounting his horse, he rode rapidly through the park to Gatewood, and found Marcia Churchill at home, by whom he was graciously received as a whilom acquaintance and now a near neighbor.

After presenting his invitation to the coming ball at the Cedars he broached the second object of his call.

"Miss Dysart was speaking about her brother Richard this morning," he said, "and she wondered if I had ever met him at the Cape. I could not recall him by name, but asked her for a photograph. She

sent me here, saying you possessed one taken since he went abroad. May I see it?"

"Surely," she said. "I will get it for you."

The abrupt naming of Richard's name by a comparative stranger unnerved this usually strong and self-contained nature, and her agitation was perceived and noted by Rossiter Kane, who drew his own sapient conclusions.

Marcia rose and went to a side table, saying the while, to cover her show of feeling,—

"We were children together, Mr. Kane, and we all love Richard very dearly."

She returned, bearing in her hand a *carte-de-visite*, which she gave him, saying simply:

"Here is his latest picture. It was taken in Cape Town, as you see, nearly two years ago."

Kane took the bit of pasteboard, and with a ceremonious "Pardon me!" went to the window the better to see.

It was lucky for him that he did this, and that his face was turned from Marcia's watchful eyes, quickened by love and eager with hope deferred, for, strong man and iron-willed as he was, Kane staggered and would have fallen but for a timely grasp of the heavy window-curtain.

He held in his hand the picture of the face he remembered only too well,—the features of which, distorted in agony, were ever before him, branded on his eyeballs in hues of fire night and day, and which he had last seen for a few tragic moments in a ruddy glare by the Mooi River many months before!

The sweat stood on his forehead in great beads, and a mist clouded his vision. But the man's despotic will triumphed, and pulling himself together he faced inward again, his back to the light, and said as quietly as he could,—

"No; it is as I thought, Miss Churchill, we never met."

The deliberate, cold-blooded lie scorched his soul, for if his surmise were correct, Richard Dysart was more than life to the proud beauty who confronted him.

"But I will have some inquiries made," he went on, "and perhaps I shall have good news for you soon."

How he managed to make his adieus and get out of the house decently and in order Kane never knew. He found himself astride his horse once more, and cantering down the chestnut avenue leading to the high-road. There he let the animal down to a walk, and began to look the appalling situation in the face.

"God in heaven!" he muttered, "I killed him in cold blood, and those two women would hate me for life if they knew!"

Hell itself and the torments of lost souls, of which we read, may be nothing more than the pangs of a guilty and remorseful conscience. Kane's worst enemies,—and he had many,—would have been satisfied could they have seen him now, racked by unavailing regret, tortured by the thought that the dead body of Richard Dysart must effectually sunder him from the only woman he had ever loved.

## VI.

THE following nights were sleepless ones for Rossiter Kane. The Cedars was full of guests, assembled for the house-warming and the ball. Scarcely a minute could he call his own. It was only after the last bedroom candlestick had vanished from the hall table, and the final brandy-and-soda "peg" had been quaffed in the billiard-room, that he might deem himself at liberty to indulge his thoughts. Then, in the silence and seclusion of his own chamber, he could face his trouble, and realize that his fondest hopes were smashed beyond repair.

Retribution in scarlet letters was burned in indelible characters upon his brain, and he, the envied of all his guests, was really the most miserable and the most to be pitied. Yet he presented a smiling front, and none amid all the gay and careless throng dreamed of the viper gnawing at his vitals.

"What shall I do? What can I do?" he groaned to himself in anguish. Confession, restitution, repentance,—of what avail would these be?

Stella Dysart might forgive, but could she forget? Never would she take to her bosom her brother's slayer, of that he felt assured. And, to do the man justice, that innate sense of right and wrong which is implanted in the worst of our race made him recoil with horror from the consequences of such a union.

And yet he loved her,—how deeply, how sincerely, he began to realize now that this bloody barrier was set between them. Could he give her up? Never!

So he began to temporize. Nothing was known. His crime could never be discovered. Richard Dysart was long ago food for the asvogs. Stella need never learn the truth unless he chose to tell it. Let her Rick be forgotten, as he would be in time, swiftly sinking out of sight in the maelstrom of life, merely another name added to the long roll of the missing.

Tossed and torn by such conflicting agonies of thought, the lurid hours went by for Rossiter Kane until it wanted but two days to the climax of the festivities. He had seen Stella but once since his declaration, and then she was not alone, but he knew that she would think it strange if he did not call.

Then arose another dilemma. She would be sure to ask him about

Richard's picture, and what could he say? His soul shrank from the thought of more deceit; he had meant that their page of life should be henceforth white and unsullied by falsehood or guile.

So he sparred for time, and wrote her daily, urging his duties as host in excuse for not being where his heart was, and telling her also that, in fulfilment of his promise, he was going to London for a few hours to set on foot inquiries about her brother.

Not that he expected any news,—the dead do not come back,—but the man's death might possibly have been bruited at the Cape, in which case it would be well for him to know the precise nature of the reports. Then too he wanted to be able to say truthfully that he had actually set the sleuths at work.

Arrived in the city, he went first of all to Lloyds, where he spent a morning poring over the files of all the South African papers. Not a syllable, not a line, could he find bearing upon the disappearance of Richard Dysart.

One solitary item alone rewarded his close and anxious scrutiny, and that reported the locating of a new diamond field on the Mooi River.

"Ah," he said to himself, "then it has leaked out!" He knew the hateful spot only too well.

Then he visited a well-known private-inquiry office in a street off the Strand, where he left minute instructions for prosecuting the search at the Cape.

"Spare no expense; use the cable freely; send your best detectives; find the young man, alive or dead, and send me the smallest item of news!"

Such a commission, from a man of such social and commercial prominence, was safe to be worked up quickly and thoroughly. Kane felt that he ran no risk in thus displaying his personal interest in what was, after all, a very natural manner.

The mere act of being busy, even on this partially fictitious errand, served to steady his nerves, and he returned to the Cedars fortified for his interview with his affianced. With a sort of blind defiance of fate he determined to let matters drift for a few days.

Stella he saw on the morning after his return, and was lavishly rewarded for his quick compliance with her maiden request.

"How good and thoughtful you are!" she exclaimed, the love-light in her eyes. "If you were one of us,—if you were Rick's own brother,—you could not do more."

The bitter-sweet of her praises moved and thrilled him more deeply than he would have believed possible one short year ago, and again his conscience smote him. But he was none the less alert to seize the opening thus afforded him.

"Remember you have yourself given me the best of all rights to help you," he murmured, "and when you give me your sweet self I shall be a brother to Rick and something nearer and dearer to you."

She suffered his caress with an altogether happy abandon. Then suddenly:

"Marcia was here yesterday," she said. "She tells me Rick's photograph revealed nothing,—suggested no one to you?"

He shook his head mutely, and inwardly thanked his stars that the form of the question he had been dreading made a verbal lie unnecessary.

"Rest assured," he said aloud, "that if your brother is anywhere on God's footstool we shall hear of him. These temporary disappearances are quite common in all the new lands. A man hears of a new diamond field or a new gold reef, or goes elephant hunting for ivory up-country, and only his immediate companions could tell you his exact whereabouts. Suddenly he reappears, sound as a dollar and rich as Croesus. Total disappearances are very rare occurrences, I assure you. Rick may return to civilization any day, and laugh at us all for worrying about him."

She hung upon his words with parted lips and wide-open eyes.

"You give me new courage!" she exclaimed resolutely. "Until we hear the worst I shall believe and hope that all will turn out as you say."

Kane breathed freely once more. Another dangerous cape was weathered, and the episode of the photograph might be regarded as closed. Stella's confidence in him was supreme. A new hope shone in her eyes,—or was it the reflex light of her own newly found happiness?

Now, it had been Kane's original intention to make the ball the occasion for announcing to society his betrothal to Miss Dysart, and at the same time to introduce her as the future mistress of the Cedars. But Stella's plea for delay frustrated this,—and fortunately so in view of Kane's terrible discovery.

Nevertheless, he looked forward to receiving her in his own house, before all his guests, much as a débutante anticipates her coming-out. But destiny was about to hurl another thunderbolt at his head.

Upon the morning of the eventful day a mounted groom galloped up to the Cedars requesting to see Kane in person. Being shown into the library, where the master happened to be alone, he delivered a letter marked "Urgent" underscored three times, addressed in Stella's hand, saying,—

"Miss Dysart requests an immediate answer, if you please, sir."

With nervous forebodings he broke the seal, but the news it contained far outran his fears, and might have staggered a stronger mind

than his. In his excitement he hardly noticed the affectionate beginning, which at another time would have filled him with delight.

"MY DEAREST ROSSITER: Rejoice with us,—my brother Richard has returned alive and well. He arrived in England two days ago, and reached us late last night. We were completely taken by surprise, as you may imagine. Richard has gone to Gatewood; can you guess why? Next to myself, of course, Marcia will be to-day the happiest woman in England. I am so glad, I can scarcely write coherently or legibly,—but I know you will understand. Sir Arthur and he have made up their quarrel.

"Now, I have a favor to ask: May I—or we—bring Richard with us this evening? He has promised to come if you will ask him, although, as he says, he is 'not very fit.' But I do so want you to meet and be friends. You remember what you said the other day. I can imagine there will be plenty of things for you both to talk about.

"Send me a line to say 'Yes,' and believe me,

"Ever yours affectionately,

"STELLA.

"P. S.—I forgot to say that Rick says he is a very rich man, and he has shaved off that horrid beard.—S."

The presence of the man-servant alone restrained Kane from some insane expression of emotion.

Richard Dysart alive and in England! Then he had not killed him, after all! The thought brought with it at first a happy revulsion of feeling. He was not a murderer!

But Dysart was none the less his victim, and he none the less a would-be assassin and an actual robber. Why, the whole fabric of his fortune rested on those stolen diamonds! These thoughts opened up such a horrid vista of new troubles and perplexities that he shrank from them in terror. Yet so quickly and mechanically does the human brain work, that scarcely a minute had elapsed since the perusal of Stella's note before he had pulled himself together and drew paper and pen towards him to indite his reply. He even managed to say to the man, a decent, middle-aged fellow,—

"There must have been great times at Denecroft last night?"

"Never see such goings on, sir, since Sir Arthur came of age," was the reply. "Master Richard, he walks in as cool and ca'm as if he'd only been away a month. But he have growed! And that rich. My! My!" shaking his head as one utterly unable to do justice to the subject.

"I judge Master Richard, as you call him, is an old favorite of yours," said Kane with a smile.

The man chuckled proudly.

"It was me as taught 'im 'ow to sit a 'orse and 'old a gun and cast

a fly afore 'e was twelve, sir. 'Twas a sorry day when 'e went away, and there's a many'll be happier for 'is 'ome-coming."

"I have no doubt of that," was Kane's reply. Then he set himself to answer Stella's appeal. Those few minutes' pause while old Carthew was speaking had sufficed for Kane to decide upon his answer, and this is what he wrote:

"MY DEAREST: Your happiness is mine, and I do rejoice with you and yours. I shall reserve my congratulations for your brother until our introduction to-night,—for, of course, he will be welcome. Pray explain to him why I send no formal invitation; nevertheless, the best robe and the highest seat at the feast shall be his.

"Devotedly yours,

"ROSSITER KANE."

When Carthew was dismissed with his answer, Kane found himself alone once more, and proceeded to confront this new dilemma.

Was there ever a more grotesque and puzzling or terrifying situation! The man whom he had shot, robbed, and left for dead at the other end of the world had returned to life and was that very night coming to dance under the roof of his assailant!

Kane laughed aloud at the bitter irony of the thing. Of course, he stood to be denounced on sight before all his guests as an assassin and a thief! A pretty ending to all his social strivings after honesty and respectability!

And Stella? What would she think of it all? How she would despise him! With what scorn would she lash the man who had dared to approach her with words of love upon his lips, while her brother's blood was upon his hands and her brother's property in his pockets!

A weaker man than Kane, physically, mentally, and morally, would have turned tail and fled; a coward would have ended it all with a bullet. It was characteristic of him that he did neither; no thought of taking either course entered his mind. He would see it through,—not in callous bravado or because he could not realize the full weight of his impending punishment, but from a sort of heroic determination to "take his medicine" like a man, and from a half-recognized feeling that therein might consist part of his expiation.

There was but one possible loophole for escape,—though even that could be only a temporary putting off of the day of reckoning. It might be that Richard Dysart had not caught a glimpse of his features on that memorable night; and if so, there was little danger of recognition or detection from any other source.

It was a bare chance, and yet, the more he thought of it, the more probable it appeared.



However, a few hours would settle it one way or the other. So, with the cool fortitude which had stood him in good stead in more than one tight place hitherto, Rossiter Kane proceeded to devote himself to his guests for the rest of the day, and at dinner that night he presided with more than his accustomed polished brilliancy and urbanity.

## VII.

RICHARD DYSART'S first act, after setting foot on dry land at Southampton, was to despatch two letters,—one to Marcia at Gate-wood, the other to Stella to Denecroft. All his boyish anger with Sir Arthur had long since evaporated, and he rightly judged that his brother would meet him half-way on his home-coming, and let by-gones be by-gones. He would arrive almost as soon as the letters.

Ninety minutes later he was in the metropolis via the steamer train, and after breakfast at his old club, the Raglan, he made sundry visits to the tailor, the haberdasher, and his bankers, and then drove to the identical private detective agency in Wellington Street which Rossiter Kane had visited only a few hours before.

If the case had gone to Scotland Yard, he might—we do not say he would, but he might—have learned that there was a sort of polite hue-and-cry out after himself. But the private-inquiry people do not do business that way; they have for one of their mottoes, "Let not your right hand know what your left hand is doing," and then proceed to collect backsheesh from both. Which is all in the way of business.

Being a straightforward sort of fellow, Richard wrote his name on a sheet of paper, intimated that he would like to see the manager in person, and was forthwith shown into the sanctum of the great man, when the following colloquy ensued:

"What can we do for you, Mr.—er—Dysart?" inquired the manager, as though he had not heard the name of his visitor in that very room considerably less than a week previously.

"I want you to undertake a little inquiry for me," was the reply.

"Connected with any particular person?"

"No one that I can name to you now,—that is for you to discover."

"Quite sufficiently vague," was the retort, "but if you will give me your instructions we will endeavor to carry out your wishes."

"I wish to find out whether there has suddenly appeared in London,—or in Europe, for that matter,—within the last year any man of great wealth hailing from South Africa, and whether that person has been in any way connected with the diamond fields, or has marketed any considerable quantity of stones. That's it, I think, in a nutshell."

"The instructions are explicit enough, Mr. Dysart," said the manager, "but I may be allowed to point out that there are probably a

dozen men in London or in Amsterdam at this moment who would come under your classification."

"Very good," said Richard coolly, "and the person I want will be one of the dozen. If it lies within your province, send me a description of the doings of each."

"Very good, sir. Anything more?"

"I think that will be enough for a starter," said Richard, "except that I should like you to trek at once,—I mean make haste, you know,—and you need not worry about the expense," laying a fifty-pound Bank-of-England note on the desk.

"You will hear from us in a few days, Mr. Dysart. Have I your address?"

"Denecroft by Blandford, Dorset," and so saying he took his departure.

"We must give them both a run for their money," soliloquized the astute manager, "but it strikes me as a case of Tweedledum and Tweedledee. The first thing is to notify Mr. Kane that his man is in England."

But before the report was prepared in the customary verbiage of the agency, there arrived a despatch from Rossiter Kane in these words:

"Discontinue search; the gentleman has been found."

#### VIII.

AND now the quick march of events brings us to the night of the dance at the Cedars, which was to confront for the first time on one stage the chief characters in this little drama.

Dinner for the house-party was over at eight-thirty, and by nine o'clock the invited guests from the nearby country-side began to arrive. Among the first flight was the party from Denecroft,—Stella and Sir Arthur, Marcia Churchill and Richard.

The historic old picture-gallery, which was to be devoted to the dancing, was already well-filled, and Rossiter Kane stood at the entrance to receive his guests in company with a young-old dowager, Lady Agatha Kingan, who had consented to chaperon the house-party, seeing that the host was a bachelor.

A typical English butler, rubicund of face, portly in form, and with irreproachable natural underpinning, announced the arrivals, and when in pompous tones he vociferated,—

"Sir Harthur Dysart and Miss Dysart, Mr. Richard Dysart and Miss Churchill," it needed all Kane's self-control to compose his features and his manner to the requisite standard of polite and genial interest.

A moment now, and he would know his fate,—recognition, exposure, disgrace, or—

Sir Arthur, with Stella on his arm, came first, and passed under the arched door of the gallery, followed by Richard and Marcia. The first couple paused a moment after their greetings, and it fell to Marcia to introduce Richard to his host.

"Welcome to the Cedars and welcome home, Mr. Dysart!" said Kane.

There fronted him a tall, athletic figure, bronzed and tanned of face, as clean-shaven as himself save for a tawny mustache, and in the man's conventional evening dress bearing not the remotest resemblance to or suggestion of the unkempt and bearded wayfarer of the Karroo Desert.

The two men gripped hands in the hearty English fashion, and each looked the other squarely in the face. This first keen glance was what Kane feared most, but in the steady gaze of Richard there was naught save the utmost courtesy.

Kane's heart leaped. He was safe, at least for the present. But there was an expression of studied interest in Richard's glance as they exchanged a few commonplaces, as though asking "What manner of man is this?" which was to be explained a moment later.

Turning to Stella, Kane asked to see her dance-card, saying,—

"My duties will not permit me to be selfish, but I claim the first waltz."

She handed him the enamelled pasteboard, and while he was pencilling his initials thereon the girl murmured in significant tones that none other could hear,—

"Be on your best behavior to-night, sir," flashing him a dazzling smile across her snowy shoulder as she was led away.

Kane sent her an answering look, and breathed more freely. The fact that the brothers were both under his roof seemed a good omen, and argued no opposition to his suit.

For the first time in many days his inner mood lightened. All might yet go well, and he resumed his task of welcoming the remaining guests with almost boyish vim and abandon.

After all, the ball would be a personal triumph, as he had at first intended, with his affianced bride as its chief ornament and attraction for him.

That waltz with Stella Dysart, he told himself, the soft perfume of her hair floating upward like blessed incense, was worth perilling a man's soul for. The while he held her in his arms he vowed to himself that he would go through the fires of perdition rather than give her up. Yet even at the thought there came to him the dread query, like a grinning demon in the midst of a feast, "What would she say or do if she knew the truth?" But he wilfully drove the thing away, and resolved, for that moment at least, to drink the cup of happiness to the last drop.

As he led her to a cool corner after the final crashing bars of the music he murmured:

"I shall call upon Sir Arthur in the morning, dearest. You can guess why."

"I will tell him to expect you," she said, lifting her eyes bravely to his, the love-light shining in their star-like depths.

"Will your brothers be likely to make any objections, do you think?" he inquired, the slight tremor of anxiety in his voice seeming perfectly natural to the girl's quick perception.

"I think Sir Arthur will be glad to get me off his hands," she said roguishly. "As for Rick, why, he does not know you very well, you see, and he must take my word for it that you are perfectly eligible, of legal age, and sound mind!"

"I'm not so sure about that last," he responded, catching at her gay humor, and answering in kind. "When a man is bewitched, you know——"

The rest of the sentence was unfinished, for at that moment Stella was claimed for the next dance, and Kane saw her no more until supper was served, when he had expressly reserved the privilege of taking her in, and she sat on his right hand with Richard on his left.

By all rules of social precedence these places of honor belonged to others, but at the last moment Kane gave orders which resulted in the arrangement named. The evening had begun and continued auspiciously, and with his customary cool hardihood he resolved to then and there test to the utmost the possibility of Richard's recognizing him.

During the repast the talk naturally drifted to the Cape. Nearly everyone knew that Rick had just returned thence, and he was kept busy answering questions as to his adventures, so that Kane was spared the necessity of originating or replying to any direct inquiries, but by a judicious remark here and there he showed his knowledge of the subjects touched on, nor seemed to manifest the slightest desire for concealment.

Every word he uttered had for its ulterior object the creating of a favorable impression upon Richard Dysart, but it was all done with such consummate tact that the younger and bluffer man was completely captivated by the elder, as was proved when, on kissing Stella good-night, after their drive home, he said,—

"Well, Sis, your Rossiter Kane seems to be a trump!"

"Thank you, Rick," was her reply. "I just knew you would like him!" and, covered with happy blushes, she disappeared.

So the ball was an unqualified success, and the star of Rossiter Kane was in the ascendant house.

At noon the next day he cantered up to the entrance of Denecroft

and inquired for Sir Arthur Dysart. On being ushered into the library he found the Baronet alone and apparently expectant, for, true to her promise, Stella had expressly asked her elder brother to remain at home that morning.

"Eh,—eh,—what's in the wind now, Stella?" the Baronet inquired, looking up from his letters, and blinking near-sightedly at his sister. "More surprises?"

Stella, to conceal her embarrassment, came around to the back of his chair and leaned over his shoulder, roughing and ruffling his hair in a certain tormentingly lovable way as was her wont.

"Aren't you glad Rick is back?" she inquired, woman-like talking of the thing that was furthest from her heart at that moment.

"Why, of course," assented Sir Arthur. "I believe we killed our fatted calf in proper fashion. It will be the happiest Christmas Denecroft has seen for many a year."

Stella sighed blissfully. "Yes," she said, "I am a very happy girl."

The Baronet grunted an assent in preoccupied man-fashion, and opened another letter. Stella wriggled a little nearer, seating herself on the arm of his chair.

"Well, what is it?" asked her brother, leaning back with an air of resignation. "Let me know the worst, and get it over."

"Oh, it's nothing alarming," gurgled Stella—"at least I hope not. Are you in a very good humor this morning, Arthur?"

"I was," he answered gravely, "but the most patient man has his limits, you know."

Stella—the dignified little Stella—fairly giggled,—there is no other name for the sound of suppressed delight and merriment which rippled from her lips,—and immediately went off on another tangent.

"Don't you think it very nice that Richard and Mr. Kane seemed to like each other so much last night?"

"Why, yes,—since we are all neighbors I should say it was most fortunate. Perhaps we ought to feel delighted that Mr. Kane likes us so well,—eh?" and he pinched the girl's cheek mischievously, while a quizzical smile twisted the corner of his mouth.

"Do you really like him?" she murmured, hiding her face on her brother's shoulder.

"Who,—Rick?" Sir Arthur perversely inquired.

"No, you old stupid,—Mr. Kane!" she replied, giving him an admonitory shake.

"Certainly. He impresses me as a fine fellow; a man of action and affairs; a man of head and of heart. In point of birth and breeding, I suppose we must concede something, but in these democratic

days the new men are coming to the front and must be reckoned with politically and socially."

During this didactic speech, delivered in Sir Arthur's most deliberate manner, Stella slid off the chair-arm and edged towards the door.

"I am so glad you feel that way," she said as she turned the handle; and then, nodding saucily at her brother, "he is coming to see you this morning!" and with a whisk of drapery she was gone.

Sir Arthur preserved his gravity for a moment, and then, with his favorite chuckle, said half-aloud,—

"Another addition to the family, I suppose!"

It is not always an easy thing to ask a father for his only daughter in marriage; but when the guardian of the girl happens to be her brother, and rather younger than the suitor himself, the task of the latter is not a whit less embarrassing.

But Kane found the Baronet disposed to meet him half-way,—perhaps because of his general liking for the man. So when, after the usual salutations and inquiries, he came to the point simply and directly with,—

"As the head of your family, Sir Arthur, I am come to ask your sanction to your sister's engagement to me," the Baronet smiled and said:

"Yes, I received a hint to that effect this morning, coupled with a command that I was not to go out. Well, Mr. Kane, what has the culprit to say for himself? You know it's a pretty serious matter to rob a brother of his only sister, particularly when that brother is a bachelor!"

"The only extenuation I can plead, Sir Arthur, is that the lady will be making another poor bachelor the happiest man on earth."

"Oh, if you put it in that way," laughed the Baronet, "I can have nothing to say, except that I do not know anyone to whom I would sooner trust Stella's happiness." And so saying he offered his hand.

"The lawyers can attend to the settlements, I suppose," he continued, "and from what I have seen and heard of your resources, Mr. Kane, I opine there is little danger of your wife ever coming to want."

They both laughed at the jest, and at this opportune moment Richard strolled in.

"Here, Rick," exclaimed Sir Arthur, "you are just in time to be introduced to your future brother-in-law. Shake hands and congratulate each other."

As Rick came forward his manner was most cordial. The morning's recollections of the night before had apparently left no unpleasant taste, and he took Kane in all seriousness and sincerity for what he appeared to be.

"See what comes of my leaving home," he said ruefully. "I find the family running at loose ends when I return, and my little sister about to be carried off into captivity. But you have my sincere congratulations and good wishes, Mr. Kane. I wish our acquaintance had begun a little earlier out yonder. I rather think you and I together could have pulled off some big things."

Kane could only bow his acknowledgments, as was perhaps natural under the circumstances, and was certainly safest.

Rick knew, out of his own experience, what the other would wish next, and said tactfully, with a quiet smile lifting the corner of his tawny mustache:

"You'll find Stella arranging her flowers in the morning-room and keeping an eye on the door. We shall see you at luncheon, I hope?"

With a grateful assent and a farewell bow Kane took his way in the direction indicated, and as he was careful to close the portals after him we will not intrude.

Proudly elated, he rode homeward in a species of physical and mental exaltation, in which mood he continued for several days.

But the reaction, inevitable to a man of his acute temperament, ere long appeared. He had failed to reckon with a foe within which night and day assailed the fortress of his iron-clad will and determination to see the thing through. The simple faith and courtesy and confidence with which he had been received for what he claimed to be by those two English gentlemen did more to undermine his purpose than if they had held him at suspicious arm's length.

Moreover, he was now a daily visitor at Denecroft, and, treated already as one of the family, he dined or lunched there more often than at home. His relations with Richard became more and more intimate and confidential. Again and again the subject of the latter's adventures in South Africa was touched upon. Once, in full family conclave, after dinner, he was compelled to listen unflinchingly, and in the full glare of the brilliantly lighted room, to a graphic recital of the tragedy on the banks of the Mooi River, to feign indignation, horror, and surprise, to join in conjectures as to the identity of the criminal, and discuss plans for his exposure and punishment. He also learned, to his dismay, that Richard had set an inquiry on foot to achieve these righteous ends.

And all this under the warm glances of the girl whom he loved dearer than life, and whose manifestations of affectionate trust and loyal admiration were thereby turned into so many scourging whips of steel.

In short, the situation was daily becoming one long, intolerable torture alike to Kane's manhood and his love. Remorse mocked at his endeavors to lift the incubus.

## IX.

THE dual wedding of Stella and Marcia was set for early in the new year, and rumor had it that Sir Arthur, moved perhaps by the sight of so much billing and cooing, would shortly afterwards console himself likewise, and put a period to his bachelorhood by leading to the altar the daughter of a neighboring county magnate.

The time was rapidly approaching, and while the girls were busied with the delightful mysteries of trousseau-building the two men, Ros-siter Kane and Richard Dysart, were perforce thrown much on their own resources, and naturally saw a great deal of each other. Frequent trips to town were necessary, and these they often made in company on the off-days when there was no hunting. Kane could never have told how it came about, but it was certainly not of his devising, and to have shown indifference or distaste would have been to court suspicion. And besides, the attraction was mutual; under any other conditions the older man would have been comrades with his intended brother-in-law with unfeigned heartiness.

On one of these off-day trips to London they travelled in the same compartment to Euston, and then, both being bound for the city, they chartered a hansom, which set them down at the Bank. Walking up Threadneedle Street, they came suddenly face to face with a shabby little man who at sight of them stopped short, threw up both hands with an indescribable gesture of surprise, and then, turning sharply on his heel, vanished round the corner.

It was Moses Plish!

"Funny little beggar," said Richard; "the last time I saw him was in Ladysmith; seemed to know us both!"

"Why, yes," said Kane, as nonchalantly as possible, "he is,—or was,—for I haven't set eyes on him in a long time,—one of the sharpest and shrewdest dealers in stones in all South Africa. In fact," with a quiet chuckle, "I've had some dealings with him myself in the old days."

"That's curious,—so have I," said Richard. "He's the man to whom I sold some stones, you remember, when I came out of the wilderness."

Arrived at the corner of Bishopsgate Street they parted, agreeing to meet for luncheon. As Kane turned away with a courteous wave of the hand, a sudden thought flashed through Rick's brain and held him rooted to the curb.

"By all that's holy!" he muttered, gazing after his late companion. "Could it be possible?"

Instead of doing his errand in the city, he hailed a passing hansom, and jumping in called out to the cabby "Wellington Street," and



within a quarter of an hour he was with our friend the manager of the inquiry office.

"Have you anything for me?" he asked.

In response he received a legal envelope, quite bulky, which he thrust into his pocket.

"I believe all the data you asked for are there, Mr. Dysart," said the head of the concern, "and we have tabulated them in what seemed to us the order of their importance relative to your inquiry."

"Thanks," said Richard, and regained his cab.

Once within its shelter he lost no time in examining the contents of the envelope. These consisted of a series of foolscap sheets, fastened together with a brass clip at the corner, each sheet bearing at the top the name of some man more or less well known in the city or the diamond trade, with certain biographical remarks appended.

And the first sheet bore the name of Rossiter Kane!

Richard replaced the envelope in his pocket and sat staring ahead at the crowded mass of vehicles in Fleet Street with a puzzled frown on his face.

#### X.

FIVE minutes after leaving Richard, as Kane was striding along Cornhill, he was overtaken by a shambling, breathless figure in rusty black, and to the whispered appeal,—

"Bister Kane, sir,—just a minute, sir!" he turned his head and saw the cringing form of old Plish at his side, ducking and bowing with abject servility.

"Well, Moses, what is it?" inquired Kane, in a business-like tone, stopping short, and drawing to one side out of the way of the hurrying throng.

With an eye to the main chance, and realizing that it would be good policy to keep on the right side of the ledger with so rich a man as Kane, Plish had instantly decided to let him know that Dysart had asked certain pertinent or impertinent questions at Ladysmith, and thus forestall any possible evil consequences to himself from his wagging tongue.

"Excuse me for troubling you, Bister Kane, but ven I see you alonger 'tother vun," pointing a dirty thumb over his shoulder, "I ses to myself, ses I, 'Bister Kane might like to know that 'tother gent was makin' inkquiries about 'im.'"

"When was this, Moses?" asked Kane, coolly snipping the end off a cigar.

"Out yonder, a matter o' six months ago. It was jest arter he'd made that there strike o' his'n in the Karroo country."

"Just so," said Kane. "But you see, Moses, Mr. Dysart and I have become very good friends, and any information he is likely to

want he'll come to me for. Thanks, all the same," and so saying he nodded jauntily to the little man and went on his way.

"Dash my vig, but 'e's a cool un," said Moses Plish to himself as he watched the tall, well-clad figure of the erstwhile adventurer disappear in the madding crowd. "Wonder if 'e knows that Cupples is in London too!"

But despite his outward nonchalance Kane was inwardly perturbed at this chance encounter. That Moses Plish was in London had probably no significance. Whatever he might suspect, he had no absolute knowledge of that dark and bloody episode on the veldt,—no one knew the truth save the two men implicated and since so strangely thrown together. And to only one of these was the whole truth known.

What was chiefly to be dreaded was that a new train of ideas might be set running in Dysart's mind. Kane feared lest a chance word should put him on the right scent, for even the dimmest suspicion would be disastrous now!

However, the two men got through their luncheon as per appointment, and the subsequent return journey was made without any noticeable strain or change in their relations. Nor was the evening spent at Denecroft any different from the many that had preceded it.

All was apparently serene. Both Sir Arthur and Richard were ideal hosts, and Stella's good-night kiss was as sweet and trustful as ever.

But the day's happenings served to kindle afresh Kane's uneasy forebodings, and intensified his distaste and horror at the part he was playing. The kindness and cordiality with which he was received at Denecroft made his own conduct, past and present, all the blacker by contrast.

That night the question occurred to him, What if Stella should discover the truth after they were married? She would scorn him with an unutterable scorn,—not for his crime,—he could fancy her forgiving that,—but for his deceit and his false pretences. That he had loved her and won her in ignorance of the identity of his victim would be no palliation of his after-offence in keeping it secret. With such a nature as hers, in which pride of birth was blended with an almost slavish worship of truth and honor, there could be but one outcome: She would spurn him from her sight!

Again: suppose Richard were to stumble on the truth, and tax him with his crime? What could he do but cower like a whipped cur?

Rossiter Kane was no common coward, but the mere thought of such a possibility caused him the keenest shrinking and chagrin.

Gradually, out of the turmoil of his thoughts, the conviction grew and took shape that his only hope of happiness lay in prompt confession

and restitution,—not an extorted avowal, but one made of his own free will, and while yet he held the reins in his own control.

Better to lose the girl now and retain his own self-respect than marry her and be found out afterwards, for in that event she would be lost to him beyond recall,—of that he felt sure.

The gray dawn of winter was creeping in around the edges of the window-blinds ere he came to this conclusion, and then it was with a strange feeling of elation and exaltation that he threw himself on the bed and slept the first refreshing sleep that had come to him in weeks.

The succeeding day was Sunday. Kane had promised to meet Stella at afternoon service and walk home with her. This had been their weekly custom since the ball, and they both dearly prized this half-hour of sweet intercourse as they sauntered through the park.

On this, possibly their last day together, Kane realized as he had never done before how inexpressibly indispensable she had become to him, and yet in that very fact he found strength for the coming ordeal, for with his customary quick decision he meant to get it over.

"You will probably find Sir Arthur and Rick in the library," she said, as they entered the hall at Denecroft, as yet unlighted save by the fitful blaze of a log fire.

"Will you join us there?" inquired Kane solicitously as he detained her by the hand.

"Certainly, if you wish it," she returned.

"I do wish it," was the reply. "I have something to say which I want you all to hear."

A new note in his voice arrested her attention, and she looked up at him in quick surprise. He drew her, all wrapped and bonneted as she was, into a little recess, and took her in his arms, imprinting on her lips a warm and passionate kiss.

"It may be for the last time, dearest," he whispered, "but do not judge me too harshly when you hear all."

"What is it?" she asked tremulously, her eyes large and luminous with tender interest and alarm. For answer he said,—

"In a little while you will know," and led her to the foot of the stairs. Slowly she ascended as though oppressed by the weight of an impending disaster; at the turn she stopped and looked back at him where he stood watching her with passionate adoration, all his soul in his eyes. Then he turned his steps towards the library.

"Hullo, Kane!" exclaimed Richard heartily, rising and flinging a book to the other end of the leather lounge on which he had been dozing. "Come in, man! You're just in time to keep us awake."

The Baronet's greeting, if less vociferous, was none the less pleasant.

"Where's Stella?" inquired Richard.

"She will be here immediately," said Kane, and even as he spoke she entered the room.

"Ring for candles, will you, Sis?" exclaimed Richard, "it gets dark so confoundedly early here."

Stella moved towards the bell, but Kane stayed her with a gesture.

"Not just yet, please, if I may interfere," he said. "I have something to tell you all,—something that is not easy for me to say,—and I think I can get along better by the firelight."

There was a lifeless quality in his voice, and his usually virile tones were curiously muffled. Richard Dysart was as far from divining what was actually coming as either of the other listeners, yet he was conscious of a quickening thrill of expectancy, aroused by Kane's words and manner, and he glanced at him keenly.

"One moment, Kane," he said; "am I concerned in the story?"

"You are!" was the answer, at which Richard drew a deep breath and settled back in his seat.

Stella moved to a place in the recess by the fireplace, where there was deep shadow; Sir Arthur and Richard sat on either side the blaze; Kane remained standing in the centre, declining a proffered seat. All looked at him expectantly.

"Richard Dysart," he began in colorless tones, "nearly a year ago you were treacherously ambushed, shot, and robbed on the banks of the Mooi River. We all know the pitiful story; no need to go over it again. The man who robbed you was then a poor outcast, down on his luck, a very Ishmael, and it may be honestly asserted through no fault of his own. This man saw you, a perfect stranger, start on your prospecting trip into the Karroo country. He tracked you on horseback from day to day, camping within sight of your fire every night, sharing your hardships, starving when you went hungry, freezing through the long dark nights because he dared not kindle a blaze which might have apprised you that you were watched. At first his only thought was to claim shares in whatever you might find. But when, ambushed in the tall grass, he saw you gather untold wealth, the demon of avarice took possession of him, and he determined to have the treasure, even if it came to the taking of life. You were nothing to him then; he simply saw in you one of an army of adventurers, many of whom would have served him the same way. He left you for dead, fled with his spoil to the coast, and thought that his secret was buried in the desert. He was rich, and he became richer; from that hour everything he touched turned to gold. But he had miscalculated the power of conscience, of remorse, and—of love. Sir Arthur and Miss Dysart, I am the man who shot and robbed your brother!"

He ceased speaking and turned away. There was silence in the

room, save for the dull snapping and flicker of the fire, while from the darkness came a woman's sobs, answered by a deep groan of anguish from the bowed form of the man who had just signed his own death-warrant.

The two men, Sir Arthur and Richard, sat looking at Kane in dumb amaze. The former was the first to find his tongue, although usually the more unready of the brothers.

"This is a most extraordinary—er—confession, Mr. Kane," he said. "I presume you are aware of the full import of what you have told us,—and—er—of the consequences," this last significantly.

The culprit bowed.

"Kane, old man," said Richard, "I'm unfeignedly sorry! I'd rather it had been any man but you. I won't say but what, since we saw old Plish yesterday, I've had certain misgivings, but I was unprepared for this."

"There was,—there is,—there can be no palliation or excuse," said Kane, lifting his head. "The guilty knowledge became more than I could carry after all your kindness and——" The sentence was unfinished, for his voice broke.

"I presume you realize that this ends everything, Mr. Kane," said Sir Arthur, with a wave of the hand to where Stella was sitting sobbing softly.

"God help me, I do!" was the reply, wrung from the anguished spirit, "but my punishment is greater than I can bear!" and with these words he left the room, and the clang of the heavy outer door announced his departure to those within.

Stella broke down utterly then, and would not be comforted.

"Send for Marcia!" she wailed, and, knowing nothing else to do, Rick set out across the park to beseech her to come to the motherless girl in her extremity.

"It is too dreadful, too horrible!" said Marcia, as they drove back after she had been made acquainted with Kane's confession. "Suppose he had killed you, as he meant to do, the wretch!" she panted. "I'll never forgive him—never!"

"Oh, I don't know," said Richard coolly. "He came mighty near it, but he just missed it, you see. If I'd caught him red-handed, or even three months ago, I expect I'd have been pretty hard on him too; but now, you see, it's different."

"I don't see," said Marcia vindictively.

"Wait till you meet Stella," said Rick significantly.

"She ought to hate him too!" insisted Marcia.

"Well, I fancy she won't," was the quiet reply, arguing that Master Rick possessed rather more insight into the workings of the feminine mind than might have been expected.

Curiously enough, much of his own hot anger and indignation had left him, and he found himself looking at the matter from the position of an outsider or an onlooker. No doubt Stella would readily enough admit the enormity of Kane's offence, but Rick could see how it might appear to her as a mere episode in a daring and adventurous man's career. Then too the beggar had made a clean breast of it!

However, Stella kept her room all the next day, and so no one knew what her feelings were.

## XI.

KANE went home to his solitary Cedars and began to put his affairs in order.

First of all, he made over to Richard Dysart the sum of fifty thousand pounds in checks and securities, the original proceeds of the sale of the diamonds of which he had been despoiled. Even this depletion of his fortune left Kane a rich man. In a few hours all was done, and he had even wired to engage passage in the next steamer for the Cape, for thence he had determined to retire and end his days. England would know him no more.

But the tugging at his heart-strings would not let him leave the old country without a word from the only woman he had ever loved or ever could love. So, in defiance of convention, and not knowing whether her brothers would interfere, he sent Stella a line as follows:

"I am leaving England for good. For the sake of our united past will you say good-by? I shall be in the church porch at sunset."

It was a forlorn hope! She might come; she might not venture to trust her strength to go through such an ordeal; she might write instead; she might not reply at all. So it was with no very hopeful feelings that Kane made his way to the sorrowful tryst.

Instead of Stella he found Richard Dysart awaiting him, smoking a long cigar and flicking the light snow from his boots with a dog-whip.

Kane halted, in doubt as to his reception and of what might be coming. It was as he feared,—he would not be allowed to see or speak with the girl!

Rick removed his cigar from his teeth and came forward, to Kane's surprise offering his hand, which the culprit gripped with fierce tenacity, a great gulp in his throat the while. In his bruised and beaten state of mind the cool nonchalance and semi-geniality of the other's manner was like a pat on the head to a pariah dog that has been uniformly kicked and cuffed all around camp.

"I received your letter about the money," said Dysart, "and I'm bound to say that you've tried to do the handsome thing, as I told Sir Arthur. I can't quite make it out, Kane. By rights, I suppose I

ought to hate you, and all that sort of thing, don't you know, but for the life of me I'm not able!" and the speaker gave a dissatisfied sort of chuckle. "Perhaps it's the life out yonder; one gets used to giving and taking hard knocks and running all sorts of risks. It's part of the great game. I won't say but what if I'd come up with you at the Cape there'd have been a lively sort of reckoning between us; but somehow I can't call you down here at home when we've eaten each other's salt and been such uncommonly good friends."

He paused, and puffed on his cigar, as if to give Kane a chance to speak, but all the latter's old audacity had deserted him, and he paced slowly back and forth by Rick's side, his gaze clouded and his brain dulled.

"Perhaps it's on account of Stella," Dysart went on musingly, as if loath to cease wondering at his own pacific state of mind. "She's hard hit, Kane,—worse than any of us, I'm afraid. What's to be done?" stopping short in his walk and facing him.

Kane groaned and staggered, and would have fallen but for the help of a friendly tree-trunk, against which he leaned his hand heavily in an excess of bodily weakness and mental abandon.

"I won't insult you by asking if you love her," Rick went on. "It's plain to be seen the little woman loves you with all her heart and soul."

"Do not keep her from me!" burst from the tortured breast of the other. "I have no right to ask it, I know, but if I do not see her it will kill us both!"

"That's about it, I imagine," said Rick sententiously. "I'm up the same tree myself," he continued with a conscious laugh, "and I know how it would feel."

"Of course, I relinquish all claim to her," said Kane. "I know that's hopeless after what has happened; but——"

"Now, look here, Kane," interrupted Rick. "I'll undertake to square Sir Arthur, and seeing that I'm the injured party I fancy he won't have much to say. Suppose Stella agrees to marry you,—in view of the facts you won't want to live in England?"

"The world is wide," answered Kane, raising his head, a gleam of hope new-born in his eyes. "I dare not ask you to be my friend, but I do ask you to trust me! I have had a bitter lesson, and I have paid dearly for my crime."

Like most healthy and sane English-speaking men, Richard Dysart hated heroics or anything approaching a scene. So he simply clapped the other on the shoulder and said bluffly:

"That's all right, old man! Good-by and good luck! Wait here and I'll send Stella to talk to you!" And whistling to his dogs, who had been nuzzling each other by the old lych-gate, Rich strode away into the fast-gathering dusk.

Soon Kane saw the little cloaked and hooded figure approaching through the private woodland path that led from the Denecroft domain. Slowly she came towards him, her veil down, nor would he seem to presume or prejudge her attitude by advancing to meet her.

Bitter sorrow and vain regret had set their seal upon his finely chiselled features, while affection unutterable and unspeakable gleamed in his eyes. With an inarticulate cry she tottered into his arms; shaking with sobs, her head sunk on his breast.

With self-accusing words he strove to soothe her, putting back the rebellious tendrils of hair that fringed her temples. By degrees he calmed her agitation, and poured balm into her aching heart. He told her anew of his undying love, and that it was because of this ennobling passion he had schooled himself to the confession which had raised up a well-nigh impassable barrier between them.

"If I had not loved you so well, dearest," he concluded, "I could not have brought myself to face it."

"And now I love you all the better," she exclaimed, smiling upon him proudly through her tears. "Your noble heart was revealed to me then!"

"You must forget me, Stella," he urged, trying to put her away from him.

"Never!" she asserted, nestling the closer to his side.

"But I leave England at once," he insisted.

"Then you must take me with you," she cried, "for I cannot live without you!"



## RETROSPECT

BY G. M. WHICHER

THE winds that sing, these mellow days,  
What old, half-silenced chords they stir!  
And when I dream, the dream betrays,  
Not what will be, but things that were.

As migrant birds, that flit afar  
When autumn lays their coverts bare,—  
Ingathering wide from wold and scar,  
They wing their flight—they know not where,

Nor how their aery course is laid;  
Where others fared in sons dead,  
They follow onward, unafraid,  
Nor guess what guide those wanderings led;

For where the devious pathway veered  
Once towered peaks above the lea,  
And silvery firths that forward steered  
Lie now beneath the trackless sea.

Yet still, by some vague impulse bent,  
They thrud the maze; and as they fly,  
The shore of some lost continent  
Is etched upon the star-lit sky.

Even so to Thee, who wert the goal  
Of all I was in days of yore,  
Across the whelming tides that roll  
Of time and chance and change, once more

My eager longings blindly turn  
O'er paths so clear in buried years;  
Towards Thee again my fancies yearn,  
And lo! my vanished self appears.





JOHN F. CARTER, M.D., OF RICHMOND, VA.  
A FRIEND OF EDGAR ALLAN POE

## EDGAR POE'S LAST NIGHT IN RICHMOND

*By John F. Carter, M.D.*



I BECAME acquainted with Mr. Poe during his last visit to Richmond, in 1849, at Duncan Lodge, the home of our mutual friend, Mrs. Jane Mackenzie, and of Poe's sister, Rosalie. He had his head-quarters at the old Swan Tavern, once a fashionable hostelry, but at this date patronized by plain, respectable people of moderate means. Here he lodged and took his meals, though his time was spent in visiting his friends, chiefly at Duncan Lodge, where as a boy and youth he had been much at home and was always welcome.

It was at Mrs. Mackenzie's that I first heard Poe recite, at her request, "The Raven" and "Annabel Lee," only the family being present. From an unusually lively mood he lapsed at once into a manner, expression, and tone of voice of gloomy and almost weird solemnity, gazing as if on something invisible to others, and never changing his position until the recitation was concluded. It happened that he had just before requested of Mrs. Mackenzie the loan of a sum of money, which request she was for the time unable to comply with;

and she now said to him, "Edgar, what do you think of giving a public recital of those poems? It would probably prove a financial success." The result was that about a week later there appeared in the city papers a notice that on a certain evening the poet would give a recitation of his own two favorite poems in the Exchange concert room, tickets to be had at a certain book-store. Over two hundred of these were printed, the charge of admission being fifty cents each.

On the appointed evening I, then a young man of twenty-four, accompanied Mrs. Julia Mayo Cabell and another lady, both warm personal friends of Poe from his childhood, to the place of the proposed recitation. We arrived some moments after the appointed time, and, to our surprise, found, instead of a full audience, but *nine* persons assembled, we, together with the usher, making thirteen in number. Some time elapsed before Poe made his appearance, when he took his place on the platform, bowed, and, resting his hands on the back of a chair, recited "The Raven" and "Annabel Lee," but in a mechanical sort of way, and with a total lack of the weird and gloomy expression which had given them such effect at Mrs. Mackenzie's. On concluding he again bowed and abruptly left the platform.

The proceeds of this experiment was *six dollars*, in consideration of which, Mr. Boyden, proprietor of the Exchange, would make no charge for the use of the hall, lights, and attendance.

On our return home the ladies with me, and one or two who joined us, commented upon the ill-omened number of *thirteen*, and also expressed much indignation at the apathy of the Richmond people as regarded Poe. Mrs. Cabell, however, attributed his failure in this instance to the fact that at this season, in the month of August, the higher social and more educated classes had not yet returned from the mountain and sea-side resorts; and this may have been the true explanation, since Poe's later "Lecture on the Poetic Principle" met with greater success. I was out of town at the time of its delivery, but am informed by Mrs. Susan Archer Weiss, who was present, that on that occasion there was a very fair audience composed of Richmond's representative society, and that Mr. Poe appeared in unusually good spirits. But the tickets were not five dollars each, as stated by a Reverend Bishop, nor did Poe on the proceeds go to New York on a spree.

Although Poe, with his proud sensitiveness, must have keenly felt the failure of his first attempt, he was never known to allude to that evening's performance except to Mrs. Mackenzie.

That Poe was not appreciated in Richmond was evident on this visit, for though he had warm friends who delighted in honoring him socially, his early record had left in the minds of the citizens generally a strong prejudice against him. Moreover, his style of writing, in contrast with such established models as Bryant and Longfellow, had

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not then become popular, and even "The Raven" was pronounced by a certain class of high-standing but prosaic citizens "fantastic and affected." Several of these, known to the writer, had been school-mates of Poe, who even in his boyhood possessed the gift of a keen wit and sarcasm, with which he mercilessly avenged any wrong or slight to himself. As an instance of this I have frequently heard Mr. John Mackenzie repeat some lines caricaturing a certain young society man whose arrogant airs had incurred Poe's displeasure. So keen was the sarcasm and ridicule that the subject of it became the laughing-stock of the whole city and could not appear on the street without being pointed out as "Don Pompiosa." Still, no one knew who was the author of the lines until it was unwittingly revealed by Poe himself, who, it may be remarked, was at that time only a boy of perhaps sixteen. One evening about dusk, passing the fashionable boarding-school of Miss Jean Mackenzie, he joined a group of her young ladies who were seated on the piazza discussing the lines in question and wondering who could be the author. Poe disclaimed all knowledge of them; when one of the girls observed that she had a copy of them about her, and requested Poe to read them, saying, "Edgar, you have good eyes; see if you can make out this writing in the dusk, for I cannot." He took the paper and read it off glibly with appropriate emphasis and several corrections; whereupon the young lady exclaimed, "Now, Edgar, I know that you must have written those lines; and you need not deny it." He did not deny it; and the finale of the matter was that the young man in question found it expedient to change his abode from Richmond to another city. It was thus that Poe made enemies, in even his boyhood; nor can he be cleared from the charge that at both that time and in his maturer years such attacks were made with malice prepense.

I have heard from Mr. Thomas Mackenzie and others of Poe's early friends many stories of his marvellous athletic powers when a boy and youth. Professor Robert Saunders, late of William and Mary College, told me that he was one of the party which accompanied Poe in a boat on his famous swim from Richmond to Warwick, and that so far from his appearing fatigued or exhausted, they had to force him into their boat to prevent his attempting to return in the same manner. I also heard Poe himself, one evening at Duncan Lodge, state to Mrs. Mackenzie and Dr. George Watson that he had on the previous day jumped a certain number of feet in three flying leaps; and on their questioning the accuracy of his measurement offered to repeat the performance, which he did to the satisfaction of the witnesses. An immediate search among the sporting magazines, both foreign and domestic, revealed the fact that Poe had actually exceeded the best jump then on record by a distance of eight and a half inches. His form, though

rather slight, was compact, muscular, and perfectly proportioned, and his movements active and graceful.

I will here state a fact of which Poe's biographers, one and all, appear to have been ignorant,—that Edgar Poe was never “adopted” by the Allans, nor his sister Rosalie by Mrs. Mackenzie. This I had from both Mrs. Mackenzie and my mother, who were for many years intimate with each other and with the first Mrs. Allan. The children were simply taken in charity, to be cared for until claimed by their relatives, who, already having charge of the oldest boy, Henry, were by no means anxious to be burdened with the others. A considerable time was spent in correspondence regarding this matter,—when Mrs. Allan, having become attached to little Edgar, offered to keep him, and Mrs. Mackenzie, who had a large family of her own, in pure charity allowed the little girl to remain an inmate of her home, to be brought up with her own children. Poe therefore never had any legal claim on Mr. Allan as either his ward or adopted son, his position in the family depending simply upon the latter's pleasure; neither was he brought up with the understanding that he was to be sole heir to his benefactor's estate, Mr. Allan's intention being to establish him in some business which would afford him an independent support. But Poe possessed neither talent nor inclination for business, and though always liberally supplied with money, his reckless extravagance at times greatly excited Mr. Allan's anger. It was reported in Richmond that one amount which the latter was called upon to pay, consisting mostly of “debts of honor,” exceeded three thousand dollars. It was not this, however, which caused the breach between Poe and his benefactor, but the former's disrespect to Mr. Allan's second wife, whom he had but recently married. It seems that when Poe returned home from the University he was dissatisfied with certain changes which the new mistress of the house had ordered in regard to his accommodations, and in an interview with her expressed himself in an offensive manner, and this being reported by the lady to her husband, the latter ordered him to quit the house, which he at once did. Poe's friends always warmly defended him in this matter, maintaining that he had received great provocation.

I had not seen Poe for some days, when he one evening, about half-past nine o'clock, called at my office, which, being on Seventeenth and Broad Streets, had afforded him a half-way resting-place between Duncan Lodge and the residence of Mrs. Shelton, on Church Hill, during his brief engagement to that lady. As was well known to his intimate friends, the engagement was broken off before he left Richmond, though whether afterwards resumed is not certain. On this evening he sat for some time talking, while playing with a handsome Malacca sword-cane recently presented me by a friend, and then, abruptly rising, said, “I think I will step over to Saddler's (a popular restaurant in the neigh-

borhood) for a few moments," and so left without any further word, having my cane still in his hand. From this manner of departure I inferred that he expected to return shortly, but did not see him again, and was surprised to learn next day that he had left for Baltimore by the early morning boat. I then called on Saddler, who informed me that Poe had left his house at exactly twelve that night, starting for the Baltimore boat in company with several companions whom he had met at Saddler's, and giving as a reason therefor the lateness of the hour and the fact that the boat was to leave at four o'clock. According to Saddler he was in good spirits and sober, though it is certain that he had been drinking and that he seemed oblivious of his baggage, which had been left in his room at the Swan Tavern. These effects were after his death forwarded by one of Mrs. Mackenzie's sons to Mrs. Clemm in New York, and through the same source I received my cane, which Poe in his absent-mindedness had taken away with him.

In person Poe reminded me somewhat of Stephen A. Douglas, though in face, form, and expression he much more strongly resembled Edwin Booth. Although I frequently met him during this last visit to Richmond, and knew of his occasional lapses from sobriety, I never saw him in the least under the influence of liquor, and was told that not even in his moments of dissipation was he known to use language which could offend the most fastidious. To me he appeared ever the pleasant and agreeable companion and the refined and polished gentleman.



## THE IDEALIST

BY MADISON CAWEIN

WITH heart self-blind,  
He struggles on, at last to find  
The best of life, the real, is left behind.

All desperately  
He breasts the height of dreams, to see  
That which he strove for, yea, can never be.

To learn, alas!  
The starry glitter in the grass,  
The light he climbed for, is a bit of glass.

God help them all  
Whose lives less honey have than gall,  
Who build on the unreal that must fall!

# THE STATE-HOUSE PLATTER

By *Alice Brown*

*Author of "Margaret Warrener," "Tiverton Tales," etc.*



"**M**ERCY on us. What possessed you to go in there?" asked Melissa Knowles comfortably. "You might ha' known you'd come out the little end o' the horn."

She sat in her snug fore-room, sewing on billowy white work. The place pulsed with warmth, and there was an earth-smell from the flower-stand in the window. Melissa was a tight-built little woman. She fitted her clothes, whatever their shape or fashion. There was hardly need of their fitting her. She was the desired of widowers, the star of men who lived alone and did their own cooking: her way of shedding comfort lured them as the flower lures the bee.

Her visitor, Deborah Collins, a remote cousin, fiery-eyed and thin, sat on the sofa and twisted the fringe of a pillow in a nervous zeal. She spoke with the heat of new-born argument.

"I went in there because I was determined to come by that platter. It ain't only that we're goin' to have a centennial celebration an' git together all the old things we can; but after that's over, I mean to scrape up some pieces o' blue an' express 'em out to daughter Clarissa, in Denver. She's homesick for the East; she's crazy over old things. Why, Luceba in there's sellin' off the old family chiny as fast as ever she can. I don't care'f she is your sister——"

"She ain't sister enough to hurt," said Melissa, biting her thread with her sound teeth. "There's a step between, you know. Sometimes I feel as if 'twas a whole flight o' stairs."

"There was that kind of a pedler that come along," continued Deborah, rocking back and forth and seeming to lash herself into a cumulative fury of speech. "He stopped to our house an' asked if I hadn't any old things to sell. 'No,' says I, 'an' I wouldn't part with 'em if I had.' An' then he showed me a blue cup-plate he bought, an' I says, 'I'll be whipped if that ain't like Grammother Knowles's.' 'Yes,' says he, 'mebbe 'tis. I bought it of a woman by the name o' Knowles.'"

"Well! well!" said Melissa, sweeping ample curves with her rocking-chair. "What's one cup-plate? She didn't sell no more. When she see he wanted the rest, she nipped her mouth together an' shet up shop."

"I found that out," went on Deborah, "an' I harnessed up an' whipped it over here an' beseeched her for the State-House platter, an' she 'most drove me out o' the house. Melissa, what under the sun made you give her that platter? She's got 'most every mite o' the blue chiny, anyways. That platter belonged to you as much as it did to her. What made you give it to her?"

"Well," said Melissa, "I guess I done it chiefly to keep the peace."

Deborah gave vent to a monosyllable of scorn.

"Yes," continued Melissa, "when I give up factory work an' come home here to live, I thought mebbe we'd git along in peace an' quietness. But we didn't, an' we had to divide off the house right through, front an' back, an' each take our own half. Well, that's neither here nor there. But when I was tryin' to laugh it out, I sort o' bought my way with her, as you might say. Everything she prized I gi'n up to her. But it never done a mite o' good."

"I guess you was sorry enough when she moved into t'other part an' took all the things with her!"

"Well, mebbe I was for a minute or two; but I never let such things worry me. I got me a good set o' common white, an' I ain't one to hang my harp on a willer an' stop singin' the songs o' Zion!"

"Too bad!" muttered Deborah retrospectively. "Too bad! Then you ain't got a mite o' blue chiny left?"

"I've got a matter of a few pieces. I wish't there was more. I should admire to send 'em out to Denver."

Melissa laughed a low laugh. It was an amused commentary on the events of many years. "I wish't I had," she said again. "There's only one thing that makes Luceba madder'n givin' up what's her'n: it's havin' anybody git ahead of her. Ever see that kind of a disposition? It's real amusin'. It begun as long ago as when we went to school—Deestrick Number Five. She never was no gre't of a scholar, but she'd set up all night to git more rewards'n anybody else. Last year she gi'n five dollars an' a half to the missionaries; but she never'd ha' done it if I hadn't gi'n five. Debby Collins, you stop!"

Deborah had scarcely moved; this was a command laid upon her inner nature to bid it pause while the speaker should evolve some great design. Melissa rose, dropping her sewing at her feet. She stepped over the pile excitedly, and made a brisk passage to the china closet across the room. There she mounted a stool, and after exploring the background of an upper shelf, drew forth a pitcher. She blew the dust from it and stepped down, rubbing it zealously with her apron.

"There, Debby Collins!" said she, "that's a real old piece o' blue. It belonged to Grammother Snow on your side o' the house. I give that to you. I give it to you right out. Now you do what I tell ye. You take it in your hand an' go acrost the entry an' call Luceba. You

tell her I gi'n it to you, an' ask her if she knows whether Aunt Liddy Pond's got the sugar-bowl like it."

Deborah rose perplexedly, and took the pitcher.

"It's a real pretty piece," said she, "but I dunno's I want to meddle nor make. She 'most snapped my head off about that platter——"

"You go!" cried Melissa peremptorily, opening the door. "Hurry up! the entry's cold. Cut right in through her fore-room. There ain't no fire there. You'll find her in the kitchen."

Deborah was swept along on the wings of another's will. With some trepidation she lifted the latch of the opposite door, and found herself on the threshold of Luceba's parlor. Another latch clicked, and the door leading into the kitchen flew open. An acrid voice called stridently,—

"What you doin' in there?"

Melissa, standing in the warmth of her own kitchen, leaned against the casing in the sun and shook with silent laughter. She heard Deborah Collins, like a conscientious parrot, repeating her lesson, but not to its end. Upon one telling phrase the other voice interposed,—

"She gi'n you that pitcher?"

"Yes. She did!" cried Deborah, with the despairing valor of one whose riches may be wrested from her. "She gi'n it to me for the celebration; an' arterwards I'm goin' to send it out West to——"

"You come here!" commanded the voice.

Silence fell, and then Deborah came scuttling back.

"My land alive!" she whispered piercingly, "she gi'n me this!"

It was a gravy-boat of precious blue. Melissa stayed not for comment; she flew again to the cupboard and snatched forth an oblong dish.

"Run back!" she cried. "Run back! Tell her I've found this—the platter to your bo't—an' gi'n it to you outright. Run an' tell her you're real pleased."

Dramatic madness took hold on Deborah. She fled away, and the two latches clicked again. Luceba might almost have been lying in wait at her kitchen door. Melissa, at the sound, called cheerfully across the entry:

"Ain't it grand I found that little platter? A gravy-bo't without a platter! It's like an old bach, no good to nobody. Ain't it lucky that's found?"

"An' she's gi'n it to me," echoed Deborah, parrot-wise.

"My soul alive!" came the voice from the other side, "that ain't the platter to't. I've got that myself. Here, Deb, you take it. You've got one, an' you might as well have t'other."

Deborah was scurrying back across the parlor, delirious with the wonder of it all; but Melissa's voice met her clearly half way:



"I've got somethin' for ye, Debby. It's an elegant big t'reen we used to have soup in, when we laid down a quarter o' beef. I'll set it ri' down here by the wall where ye can git it. You jes' come an' look."

"You stay where ye be!" came the opposing voice. "You want this Lafayette plate? Take it, then!"

Deborah, like a wandering incandescent body, was drawn hither and yon across the cold parlor. At one point, Melissa fell upon her and relieved her of certain plunder. Melissa's eyes were wet from laughter. Her voice shook with her quivering flesh.

"Set 'em down inside my door!" she whispered. "There! now you run back an' tell her how pleased you be."

Deborah swept back again like one who had no guiding will save that of a beneficent deity; but before she could open her mouth in speech, Melissa's call came ringing after her:

"Debby, I'm goin' to give you an Independence pitcher, Liverpool ware. It's considered an elegant thing."

"You take these four cups!" cried Luceba, in shrill competition. "T'others are gone."

"I've got 'em!" called Melissa cheerfully. "Here they be, Debby. Here's enough to complete the set."

Deborah, taking her pendulum trips, glanced helplessly at the horse-hair sofa, wondering whether she might sit down for a moment and recover from her wonder; but its rigidity forbade her. She could only totter limply across, and deposit her spoils in Melissa's hospitable territory. But not yet was she allowed to pause. Melissa, with a merciless hand, pushed her back again, calling:

"On'y, you look here, Luceba! 'twould most pay you to come in here an' look! Here's them Cadmus plates!—they're worth I dunno what all!—an' sure as you live an' breathe, I'm goin' to send 'em out to Denver. I guess nobody ever had a bigger windfall. I'll pack 'em so's they won't jar a mite——"

Deborah stood in the entry, regarding her with lips agape. So, according to her ideas, might paradise come down to man. A step fell upon the parlor floor, and shook it. Melissa, busy over the array of china, dusting and assorting, knew it and did not once look up. She hardly believed yet in the finality of her own triumph. Luceba stood in the doorway, gaunt, muscular, a figure of gloom with the face from which daguerreotypes are made. She carried before her, shield-wise, a State-House platter of imposing breadth.

"Deborah Collins," said she solemnly, "I'm goin' to give this into your keepin'. It's the biggest one you ever see, an' it's got the place for gravy, all complete. It never's had a nick or a break. You be careful of it!"

She set it down, like a warrior relinquishing his armor, marched

back into her fore-room, and shut the door. The two women heard the sliding of the little bolt.

Melissa, awed by the dramatic rushing of events, stood hand in hand with Deborah Collins, the china at their feet.

"I declare," whispered Melissa, abashed and yet triumphant, "I'm 'most ashamed! No, I ain't either! She don't prize 'em except as other folks do. Here! you let me git that bushel basket out o' the shed, an' I'll pack 'em up double quick."

She flew about in frantic haste, while Deborah sat by, limp and weak over her own good fortune. Deborah said afterwards that Melissa worked like a beaver and finished the job in seven minutes by the fore-room clock.

When Melissa was thrusting in the last wadding of paper, with a resolute hand, she looked up to say:

"You back out your horse. Drive 'round to the shed door. We'll lift this right in."

Deborah had a mounting vision of hot biscuits and quince preserve.

"It's goin' to be bright moonlight!" she quivered.

"I can't help it if 'tis!" returned Melissa. "You've got to git these things out o' the house while she's in the same mind. I shouldn't wonder if she chased out to Colorado arter 'em yet. But if she does, I'll start for Mexico. That'll fetch her."

Deborah felt the sustaining power of a spirit stronger than her own. Presently she was mounted in her old wagon, the reins in her hand, while Melissa, flushed with triumph and the sunset light, stood there, hospitable and yet bent on speeding her away.

"There! there! Debby," said she, "we'll talk it all out another time. Mebbe I'll see you Sunday." She gave the old horse a decisive smack on the flank, and he plodded down the drive.

Melissa lingered there for a moment, watching the wagon on its rattling way. There was a parting of clouds in the west, a thin marge of sunset color,—the cold yellow of the dying year. She watched it fading into the green above, and when the chill wind recalled her, turned and went in, exhilarated yet shivering.

"Well," she said aloud, "it's a queer world!"

She stepped about, getting her abundant supper, a little sorry for everybody but herself: for Clarissa in Denver, because she was far from home—for Deborah, because she had gone away supperless—for Luceba, who had given up something she did not want, but still had given it. With a sudden softening of heart, she went into the shed and called:

"Luceba, what if you should come in to supper? I'm goin' to have rice griddlecakes."

"Be ye?" came the voice in answer, resolute, undaunted. "Well, I'm goin' to have buckwheats."

# STRAIGHT AS A STRING

*By Caroline Lockhart*

(SUZETTE)



"I T'S gettin' cold, ain't it, Husky, boy?"

McNeal, the prospector, shivered a little under his blankets and raised himself from his bed of pine-boughs to look at the camp-fire burning just outside the entrance of his tent. The wolf-like dog raised his head from his paws and lifted his amber eyes to the face of the man.

"We're needin' of another blanket bad, but I reckon we'll have to make out without it somehow. Blankets cost money in Montana, and we can't pamper ourselves when the little woman back in Massachusetts is a-needin' of cash. Ain't that right, Husky? We're goin' down fer grub to-morrow, and it's more'n likely there'll be a letter there from her. But we won't read it then, Husky, we'll save it, and when we git home to-morrow night we'll read it lyin' here by the camp-fire. I'll read it, and then—if it ain't too lovin' and personal like—I'll read it to you. How'll you like that, eh, Husky, boy?"

The dog kept his grave eyes on the beloved face and listened. He was accustomed to these whimsical monologues.

"Yes, sir," continued the man with a joyful note in his voice, "I'll read it, and you can see fer yourself what kind of a woman my wife is. It'll be like havin' her spend an evenin' with us. We ain't much used to company, you and me, and we don't like it neither. I'm afraid we're gettin' some queer, livin' off in the mountain alone so much. But my wife! You'd like her, Husky. Say, you'd walk right up and put your head in her lap the minute she set down. She's got black eyes, and shiny black hair combed smooth and slick, but with little, wavy things up on her temples. No frizzes, though, like them females down to Kalispell wears. She's the smartest woman you ever seen. Used to be a school-teacher. She ain't like me, Husky, she's educated. Don't know how I ever happened to git her; jest about the only luck I ever had, till I struck this here lead. She's straight too, Husky, straight as a string. I'd stake my life on her. She'll stick to me through thick and thin. It's an awful comfortin' feelin' to feel you can count on somebody like that. When I make my stake, Husky, I'll give her the best in the land. Lord! Lord! the air-castles I build

with her in 'em, as I lie here lookin' at the fire-light dancin' on that pile of ore. Ain't them dandy copper spec'mens, Husky? Did you ever see any better'n them? Look at the color of 'em, green with purple and blue, like a peacock's tail. You ought to heft 'em. Copper, mighty high pure copper, I'm bettin', from their heft.

"Reckon some folks would think I was plumb locoed, lyin' here in my bunk night after night starin' at them spec'mens and dreamin' about her. Reckon they think I'm locoed anyway, stayin' up here in the mountains all winter workin' my claim. But you understand how it is, Husky. It's fer her. The more work there's done on it, the easier it is to sell, and the quicker I kin get to her. Want to have it in good shape when them fellers come up from Butte in the spring to look at it.

"Gosh, but it's gittin' cold. Come, git under the covers with me, Husky. It's too blamed cold to sleep separate. The feller that named this here place Iceberg Lake knowed what he was doin'."

The dog crept under the blankets, and they fell asleep. The fire burned to cinders and was scattered by a cold wind, which rose and swept over the mountains, howling through the gap till the little canvas tent strained at its pins. The man inside moaned in his sleep and snuggled closer to the dog, but neither awakened till the morning came and the wild mountain goats, far up on the jagged sides of a towering mountain, were filing out of their dens to their feeding-grounds on the top.

French Pete, tilted on the hind legs of his chair on the porch of the "Miners' Haven," the leading hotel in Swift Current, first spied McNeal and his pack outfit coming down the mountain trail.

"Yep, that's him all right," asserted Dad Walker, "comin' in fer grub before the first snowfall, I reckon. That fellow must eat roots. Old Man Harris says he don't buy grub enough to feed a three-year-old child."

"Too stingy, I reckon," replied French Pete, who was known as a tin-horn gambler. "It's been two years since he first hit this here camp, an' I never knowed him to buy anybody a drink yit."

"He ain't an overcoat to his back," chimed in Bacon-Rind Dick, who, tolerably sober, was swinging his legs from the edge of the porch.

"Wore a dollar-and-a-half sweater under his coat all last winter and arctics instead of socks. Them overalls and some cotton underwear is all he's got between his skin and the world. I claims that when a man gits to thinkin' so much of money as that, it's mighty near bein' a sin."

Bacon-Rind was never known to have more than two dollars at one time since he arrived in camp, three years ago.

"That's right," nodded Dad Walker.

"Misers riles me," asserted French Pete.

"Naturally they would in your perfession," observed Dad Walker genially.

McNeal rode into town and hitched his saddle- and pack-horses in front of Old Man Harris's general merchandise store, quite oblivious of the fact that he and his frugality were subjects of scorn to three of Swift Current's most prominent citizens. He felt that he was not popular, and he knew the reason why; but public opinion was the least of McNeal's troubles.

"Airy letters fer me?" inquired McNeal in a confident tone as he paused for a moment to scrape the mud from his heavy boots on the door-sill of the general merchandise store.

"Didn't take notice," said Old Man Harris, which was his set reply to all such inquiries. Old Man Harris, as postmaster, was anxious to avoid any appearance of vulgar curiosity concerning the mail, though, if the truth were known, he could have told every letter that had come into camp for a month back.

"Here's one of them Chicago books on the winter style fer gents. Reckon that'll be entertainin' and useful readin' up to Iceberg Lake," said Old Man Harris grimly as he handed out a bulky catalogue.

"But letters, gimme my letters." McNeal drummed on the counter with impatient fingers.

"I'm givin' you all they is," replied the postmaster. "Here's a letter from them hair-tonic and mustache-dye folks, and that's all they is to-day."

McNeal caught his breath and stood quite still, looking at the postmaster. Husky looked up into McNeal's face, then touched his hand with his cold nose.

"I was kind a-expectin' a letter from them smelter people," said McNeal in a strained voice.

"There'll be a mail in to-day if them Davis boys don't stay down to Cut Bank to the half-breed dance," said Old Man Harris. "They'll be here by four if they're comin'."

"Guess I'll git my grub and wait around awhile fer 'em," said McNeal slowly. "Got any good swinebosom?"

McNeal handed his list to the storekeeper and stood with his hands in his overall pockets staring hard at a show-case full of ready-made neckties. He was dazed. His heart sagged in his breast. What was the matter? Was she sick? It was six weeks—yes, a full six weeks—since he had been down last. No letter in six weeks! He went outside and sat down on the edge of the porch in front of the store, where he could watch the trail up which the Davis boys would come with the mail if they did not stay to the half-breed dance.

"Grub's ready for packin'," said Old Man Harris.

"All right," replied McNeal shortly, "I'll git it directly."

The camp went to dinner, but McNeal, with Husky's head in his lap, remained on the porch. The camp finished dinner, but McNeal still sat watching the trail.

Bacon-Rind Dick ventured a joke about expectin' a letter from his girl. McNeal replied with dogged persistence that he "aimed to hear from them smelter folks."

It was McNeal who first saw the heads of the Davis boys' horses bobbing through the trees. He tried to appear indifferent when Ben Davis threw the mud-spattered mail-bag into Old Man Harris's arms, but the hand that stroked the silky hair on Husky's head shook noticeably.

"There's a letter in there fer you, McNeal, that came to Ben De Ruche's office by mistake. He told me to tell you how it happened it was opened. It's been layin' there for nigh on ten days. But they ain't been no mail through, so he hasn't sent it. Reckon a matter of ten days ain't no great importance in this country."

When the mail was opened McNeal's big hand was the first outstretched.

"Got it, did you?" inquired Bacon-Rind Dick. He added, grinning, as he saw the eagerness with which McNeal looked at the address on the slender gray envelope, "Them smelter folks must write terrible entertainin' letters."

"That's from my wife," said McNeal proudly. "Writes a good fist, don't she?"

Ben Davis, leaning against the show-case, eyed McNeal's glowing countenance curiously. McNeal studied the envelope with yearning eyes. He had meant to save it until his return to his lonely camp back in the mountains. Opening her letter by the camp-fire was a treat he had planned while blasting and working with his pick day after day in the drift he was running into the mountain-side. But here the envelope was open. He could see the letter on the inside. The temptation was too great. He could not wait the six hours it would take him to get back to camp, cook supper, and tidy up for the night.

He wished to read it alone. The people and the conversation all around disturbed him. At the end of the rickety bridge thrown across the rapid mountain stream from which the mining-camp took its name there was a flat rock. It was only a short distance from the store, and McNeal sat down upon the rock to read his letter. Ben Davis came out and leaned against the front of the store watching his face. McNeal read:

"MY DEAR HUSBAND: It is difficult to say what I have to say, but it must be said. I hate to have you disappointed in

me, but, as I have told you, you always estimated me above my worth. Bluntly, I have grown to care for somebody else. If you had been with me, I might have gone on caring for you, but as you have not been here, I have grown tired of loneliness and struggling along on nothing a year, and gradually have turned to someone else, till that someone else is all to me that you were.

"I have waited patiently three years for you to make the stake you were always about to make, but it is no nearer made than it was when I met you. No doubt, you have sent me all the money you could spare, but it is not enough. I am sorry if I hurt you, but I am going away with this someone else who is better able to give me the things I desire. I cannot believe it will make so much difference to you, or you would have in these years come to see me or written more of your love for me, and told me oftener that you missed me. I hope you will make your stake and find someone more worthy than I to share it with you. Lovingly,

"AGATHA."

McNeal read it to the end, spelling out words he could not grasp readily.

"Oh God! my God!" It was like the groan of an animal in the slaughter-pen when, mortally wounded, it drops to its knees in the dust. McNeal's fists were clinched till the knuckles went white—the perspiration broke out on his ghastly face.

"It ain't so! it ain't so!" he whispered savagely. "She wouldn't do it. She couldn't do it. She was blue. She didn't mean it. I won't believe it. I'll go to her. I'll see for myself. Oh Agatha, Agatha!"

He sprang to his feet and half walked, half ran to his horses hitched to the porch posts. He ripped the pack-saddle from Molly, the pack-horse, and threw his heavy cow-saddle on her back. She was fresher than his other horse.

"Any special call fer you to git such a gait on?" inquired Bacon-Rind Dick with amiable curiosity as he lounged in the doorway.

"Dry up, Bacon-Rind," ordered Ben Davis curtly. "McNeal," he said in a voice singularly gentle for him as he walked around to where the prospector was tightening the hind cinch with savage jerks, "there's snow in them clouds over thar by Chief Mountain. You know as well as me that the first snowfall is a corker. I wouldn't go down on the plains to-night."

"It's no business of yourn where I go," said McNeal fiercely as he swung into the saddle.

"I know it, McNeal. Go if you will go, but stick to the coulées, don't cut across the plains."

"Go to h—l!"

McNeal plunged the spurs into the gentle mare's round sides and galloped across the rickety bridge, disappearing among the pines

through which the rough mountain trail wound. He kept Molly on a gallop down the trail, where, ordinarily, horses picked their way with care.

The east-bound train on the Great Northern reached Blackfoot at four-thirty in the morning. It was four o'clock in the afternoon by McNeal's big silver watch. It was sixty miles to Blackfoot. Joe Kipp would lend him money, and he would leave Molly as security.

"I am going away with someone else. I am going away with someone else," was the sentence which ran through his head till it seemed as if all in the world had resolved itself into these few words.

"That cursed delay at Ben De Ruche's," he muttered. "If I could have had it this morning! That squaw read it, half the reservation know it by this time. Davis knew it. But it ain't so, it ain't so," he cried, raising his voice angrily and striking the pommel of his saddle, as though he had been contradicted. "She'll be there waiting for me. It's just a joke. Why, she's my wife and—straight as a string."

He galloped down the slope where Pike, the freighter, usually upset his wagon, past the Savis berry-bushes where "Butch," the squaw-man, shot Percy De Wolf for stealing his Indian wife, and down at last among the foot-hills, where soon the trail stole off across the vast plain, which was a part of the Blackfoot Indian Reservation. He looked behind. Dense, low-hanging clouds of gray were moving after him from the northwest. It was growing cold, and the stillness of death was in the air. McNeal shuddered. He did not know why he shuddered, for he was not cold. Up on St. Mary's Lake he saw the smoke rising from the chimney of Butch's log house. Husky looked up inquiringly when he rode past. When the trails branched, he took the trail across the plains. It was shorter than the one which followed the coulées, though not so safe on a dark night.

The dull gray light faded, and night shut down suddenly, as though a thick blanket had obliterated the sun. A damp wind, whose chill was penetrating, began to blow out of the northwest. Molly galloped and walked, then galloped again. McNeal gave her her head and let her pick out the trail when he could no longer see the light serpentine streak winding away over the plains. He could tell by the sound of her hoofs that she was on the trail, so he turned up the collar of his thin, thread-bare coat and huddled over the pommel. Husky, like a wolfish wraith, trotted behind. McNeal had ridden for an hour when something wet fell on his cheek. He put up his hand and wiped it away, but another fell and then another. It was not rain, it was snow. McNeal set his teeth and touched the weary mare with his spur. She galloped again, but the snow came faster. McNeal felt the soft flakes on his hands and his face. The wind rose higher and after awhile the snow began to sting as it struck the back of his head. Then it came out of the clouds



like bird-shot from a shot-gun. It began to swirl, and pelted him in the face, the eyes, the ears. He pulled the limp brim of his hat farther down and crouched lower in his saddle. The wind howled over the prairies, and the legs of the overalls Bacon-Rind had scorned flapped and wrapped tightly about his thin-clad limbs. It blew Molly's long mane into his face. The gallant mare galloped on, her hoofs still ringing on the well-beaten trail.

McNeal's hands grew stiff, so he laid the reins on Molly's neck and tucked them under his arms. His teeth chattered. He might as well have ridden naked, so little protection did his clothing afford against the piercing wind. He got off to walk and warm himself, but Molly could not understand when he was not on her back that she was still to follow the trail. He could not find it save by fumbling with his hands, so he climbed back into the saddle and urged her on.

"What a night, McNeal, what a night," he muttered between his chattering teeth. The storm increased and raged with fury known only on the Western plains, where it has full sweep. McNeal could not see his hand before his face from the snow and the wind that made him gasp for breath. The very marrow in his bones seemed frozen. He was cold, so cold. He wondered vaguely how his heart could beat when his blood seemed turned to ice. The cold was more than pain, it was torture. At intervals it wrung a groan from him, but his thoughts were of her.

"She needs me. The train! I must get there. Four-thirty—four-thirty. She had the blues. She didn't mean it. She wouldn't do it. My wife, my sweetheart! She needs me! Oh Molly, Molly, keep the trail! God! what a night to be on the plains!"

Over and over he thought in these same disjointed sentences. Though he realized his danger, he felt no fear save the fear of missing the train. The obstacles in the way were nothing. He saw only his goal. His hands, his ears, his cheeks, his legs in their blue cotton overalls, were numb.

"I wonder if I'm freezin'," he thought. He gave a start as he recollected that he had not heard Molly's hoof-beats in the trail for some time. The snow muffled her steps. He stopped, and with difficulty climbed out of the saddle to feel for the trail. His hands were so numb he could feel nothing. He swung them about his shoulders, then he slipped them under his saddle-blanket next Molly's warm back. Gradually he became able to bend his fingers, and when he pressed his thumb-nail into the other fingers he could feel it, so he stooped again and fumbled in the snow. A groan of agony burst from him when he felt a bunch of dried grass.

"Husky! Molly! We're lost!" His voice was carried away by

the howling wind. The dog crouched at his feet in the snow, and the tired pony stood with spreading legs and drooping head.

"We must keep moving or we'll freeze like sheep." No one heard his desperate voice, but Molly followed when he slipped the bridle-rein over his arm, and Husky was close at his heels.

"It's all up now, I'll miss the train. If I kin only keep goin' till daylight. Agatha, dear, dear little girl. It's nothin' at all if it warn't fer you. Freezin's pleasant, they say, after the first on it. 'Pears like I'm past the first on it. It don't seem to hurt any more. I'd feel tolerably easy, if I weren't so tired and sleepy. It's past bed-time, I reckon, little woman, that's why I'm so—tired and—so—sleepy. Husky, boy, we must—have been—walkin' quite—a spell. Let's rest—let's sit down and rest—seem curious, I reckon—to rest—in a blizzard. Five minutes—Husky—just a—nap, then we'll—go on. We mustn't—pamper—ourselves—when she's needin' of cash. Her hair—is—black—and—shiny. She's educated—she's fine—not like me. Straight as a string—Husky—boy—straight as a string. And—I—love her—with—all—my—heart."

McNeal's head dropped and pillowed itself on the snow, the bridle-rein slipped from his arm, the shivering pony stood beside him, the dog licked his cold face and howled, then the dog and the pony wandered off together for shelter under a willow in a nearby coulée, and the snow covered McNeal, who slept to wake no more.



## THE UNKNOWN PATH

BY BLANCHE TRENNOR HEATH

LOVE turned, and stretched his hand, and she forsook  
 The pleasant ways of which her feet were fain,  
 Green field and garden fair and woodland nook,  
 Soft dew and scent, and sweet, familiar strain,  
 An unknown path to tread  
 Set round with briers and songless boughs instead.

But as they walked, close leaning each to each,  
 Behold, beneath the passing step of Love  
 Sprang redder roses, and his murmured speech  
 Woke sweeter strains, that, silver-clear above,  
 From some blue mountain-zone  
 Midway to Heaven thrilled with joy unknown!

# THE WAY OUT OF THE WOODS

*By Elizabeth Dike Lewis*



WHEN he was sure of his degree at Göttingen, Burgess went up into the Harz to rest for a month and to finish the press-work on his German thesis.

He stayed in a forester's cottage in Bergesthal, a small village where at sunset the shadow of the Brocken fell. From the cliffs above, the valley was commanded by the Bergesthal Princes' castle. The American student was as completely in retreat as any world-weary monk, and he did most of his proof-reading on benches placed in the woods by the local "society of beautification."

One day while striding with the forester along one of the paths that follow the road they met the local Prince's carriage. It was a familiar sight in the village. The smart liveries and shining horses dashed through the street on some errand several times each day, but the trap was always empty. Here, along the wood-road, they were drawing a low victoria at a walk, and as it neared Burgess he caught the flutter of a lace parasol. The forester touched his arm.

"Her Highness, our Princess,—Ilse von Bergesthal," he whispered; "she will salute us."

And Burgess lifted his cap to a radiant vision whose thin white gown trailed a little out of the carriage, whose brilliant red hair caught the sunlight through the leaves, though the ruffle of the parasol shaded the deep eyes, complacently staring at the foreigner. Her companion, an older woman, also in white, devoted herself to a punctilious acknowledgment of the forester's salutation.

Burgess looked after the carriage. When it had turned the corner the road appeared distinctly empty.

"What glorious, incomparable beauty!" he exclaimed to his companion in the enthusiastic German phrase. "Your Princess really looks like a princess! She's the first one I ever saw who did. She can't be the wife of that old Prince who shoots everything?"

"The Prince is a widower, Meinherr. This is his eldest daughter, and we think her most fair and gracious. I have myself spoken with her three or four times personally. She has been most kind. But

we are no longer the people of our Prince in the good old sense. He has little power now; but his family is nearly royal and of untold wealth. They have the blood of many reigning houses. They can wed royalty itself. Indeed, they have even talked of this Princess's younger sister as a bride for the Kaiser's son. She is a year older, but it is not impossible, unless we need a foreign alliance."

Though the forester's reverential tones amused him, Burgess took a normal American's interest in royalty.

"Who was the other lady?" he inquired.

"An English lady who is companion to the Princess. The Princess knows all languages," said the Herr Forester with dignity. "But the English lady speaks German too, quite like a Christian; I have heard her," he added, with an air of giving honor where due. Burgess cast a smothered sigh over his shoulder where the carriage had disappeared, and reflected that cinematographic radiant visions were an unfair test of a student's temper.

One of his favorite benches for proof-reading after the early stroll through the woods was on the Scharfenstein, a rock capping an overhanging knoll, shut in on three sides by a thick young growth of larches and mountain ash, and in front commanding a wide sweep of country from the Brocken to the Hohne Klippen, dominated by the grim castle of Bergesthal. For a week of afternoons he had worked there in perfect seclusion; but as he sat surrounded by proof on the first Sunday morning after his walk with the forester he heard voices approaching, and swiftly reflected that no one need expect to escape human society in German country on the day of rest and promenades. He reluctantly gathered up his papers, and when the bushes parted behind him was ready to retreat. But he was already face to face with the invaders.

"The Princess Ilse!" he murmured. There was no mistaking that crisp, flaming hair, and a man in the princely livery held the branches aside for her to pass. But she started back before Burgess and his fluttering papers.

"We go elsewhere," she said quickly to the servant.

Burgess lifted his hat. "I entreat your Highness," he stammered. It was his first encounter with Altessen. The lady looked startled, and her servant as well. Did he resent the impertinence involved in addressing his mistress?

"You are at work," she said, hesitating.

"No longer," said Burgess. "Your Highness would give me the greatest pain by not remaining. We are in the park of the castle."

"The Scharfenstein is free to all. I could not think of depriving you."

She stood in the path which furnished the only exit. Burgess could not make even a show of leaving. Unless he leaped over the rock into

the gorge below he must stand dumbly to await her pleasure. She twisted her turquoise parasol handle and looked him over.

"You are a foreigner," she observed presently. He realized that his accent was too light to be native, and gave a resigned shrug.

"I have the honor to be an American citizen and your very humble servant," he returned, but with the true German student's bow.

"I cannot think of driving you away," the Princess repeated, "but I will look at the mountains and rest a moment,—provided you will stay here too."

In America, Burgess reflected, her proposition would have suggested coquetry verging on indiscretion, but her tone and expression were simply those of the liege lady granting a favor. She was not the very young girl he had at first thought her. He guessed her to be nearly his own age, with that assurance of poise and manner which only wide experience or very exalted position can bestow. She was again dressed all in white. Her dark eyes, on a level with his own, were shaded by flaxen lashes. The effect was peculiarly deep and thrilling. She looked at him with a frank, indifferent gaze, awaiting his assent, and when he bowed and turned away from the path she stepped forward to look at the view.

"The Brocken looks far away to-day," she remarked.

"And very large, by comparison," said Burgess, who inferred that she was addressing him rather than the servant.

"Why by comparison?" asked the Princess.

"With the other hills," he explained.

"True, they are all small," she admitted. "The whole Harzgau is a lovely miniature model."

"Lovely," assented Burgess, looking into her eyes, "and different from anything I ever saw. If your Highness——"

She turned hastily from him and took a book from the servant's hands. "You may wait below with the carriage," she said, and went to the bench. "I will read here for a little while. I do not disturb you?" she interrogated, always in the same coolly impersonal tone. Burgess murmured something, and she opened her book and read, turning the leaves lightly on her lap, while the parasol dropped to her shoulder. Its deep lace ruffle hid her face; its turquoise crook twisted through her heavily ringed white fingers. Burgess could just see the young bosom rising and falling a little too quickly after the climb from the carriage-road. Her blouse was confined at the belt by a heavy gold buckle studded with turquoises. The white folds of her skirts swept against his feet. He had not spoken to a woman for a month, and though he had recognized no insatiable thirst for their society, he had been just bored enough to appreciate it when it came. He was

reflecting that she really was quite like one's story-book princesses, when she tipped back the parasol and looked at him.

"I am disturbing you," she announced. "I have interrupted your writing."

"Not in the slightest degree," he declared.

"Then go on with your work."

In order to comply with the royal mandate he pulled out his proofs again and bent over the close German type. He was presently to find that if princesses can give high-handed orders, they can be as inconsistent as mere women. After making a few mechanical corrections in the margins he raised his head to find her looking at him.

"Are you a great author?" she asked presently.

"A poor student," he answered.

"I believe you have been taking a degree! Here in Germany? But it is very difficult!" she exclaimed. "May I see the title?"

He unrolled a yard or two of proof and displayed the thesis heading. She spelled it out slowly and smiled in frank ignorance.

"It's astronomical, I suppose," she said. "But I don't understand, of course."

"More chemistry than astronomy, and more physics than either," Burgess explained. "You would understand if I said it had something to do with spectrum analysis?"

The Princess laughed and shook her head. "I am afraid my education is not very profound. And yet, to think that you should write something in my own tongue which I cannot understand! *Tant pis pour moi!*" and she eyed him narrowly for a moment.

"Nay, *tant mieux*, I assure you, a narrow escape," he insisted, and then, recollecting himself a little, he went on with smiling deference, "Your Highness is only too kind to take an interest." The Princess closed her parasol and poked the ground with its ivory point.

"Will you tell me how you knew who I was?" she asked.

"The forester told me," Burgess answered simply. "We were walking on the Schierke road nearly a week ago when you drove past."

"Oh, yes, with—with?" suggested the Princess.

"With an English friend,—your companion, I think."

"I remember," she said a little wearily. "I think I must go now. This is a lovely spot. The dip into the gorge—the rise to the hills—the—the castle!—and the Brocken above!—it rests one's eyes. Do you come here often?"

"Every afternoon. It is wicked to work indoors in this air."

"I must go now," the Princess said again. Burgess wondered whimsically what etiquette demanded of a man who had received a call from a glorious Personage on a mountain cliff. Should he urge her to stay? Should he press her to come again? Should he—oh, if

only he could have begged or she suggested that he might call at the castle on the opposite hill! It was barely possible that she too might welcome the diversion. The wild thought faded into actualities as he restored the book she had dropped in rising and bent back the springy larch boughs for her to pass out. Then it occurred to him that he could, that he ought, to attend her to the carriage. "Not to the bottom of the hill," she protested, as she clambered, half slipping, down the steep, short path.

"I shall not be coming up again," he assured her. "It is best that your Highness should not go alone."

"Wild animals?" suggested the Princess, pausing to look around at him, and they both laughed.

"These are not like your woods in America," she added. The observation was in the form of a statement.

"Have you been there?" he asked quickly.

She looked sharply at him. "I have read a great deal," she explained. "You would laugh at me if you knew how much I think about it. It seems to me that America is a little the *patrie* of everyone who is not quite free."

"I believe you speak English," he exclaimed. "Why didn't you tell me? I beg your pardon, but I haven't heard a word of it for six months!"

"Will you take my book," she said, in slightly labored English, "and keep it in memory of *zis pleasant quart d'heure*?" He took the book from her hands as they emerged on the road, where the shining horses pawed the dust before a light trap with a rumble.

"Adieu," said the Princess, giving him her hand, and she waited. Burgess shook it, and bowed his stiff little German bow. "Adieu, Madame," he answered. As the carriage bowled away the impassive man in the rumble stole a long backward glance at the mysterious foreigner, still standing where they had left him.

A few days later Burgess came to the tardy conclusion that in spite of printer's charges a whole section of his thesis must be rewritten. The better to clear his mind for action, he left the rolls of proof at home and betook himself with only note-book and pencil to the Scharfstein.

The Brocken was faintly veiled in the mist which a hot sun in a cloudless sky loves to draw over the distance in the Harz country. The Stein was very fair and still, yet the same emptiness was noticeable about it, Burgess thought, that he had observed on the road after he had first seen the Princess Ilse. The flies hovered humming in the sunlight. A snail made slowly for the shadow. There was an impression of waiting in the air. He sat down on the shady end of the bench

and began mentally to compose a difficult transition paragraph on the future of the spectroscope. The first sentence never got as far as the paper. The leaves behind him rustled, a gentle footstep sounded on the rock, and without further warning the Princess Ilse, in a cotton gown, with a crimson face, emerged alone from the hidden path behind the bushes. The peculiar taint of emptiness faded away from the neighborhood. Burgess sprang to his feet, more breathless than she. She threw herself down on the bench, and he stood amazed before her.

"Have you ever done what you should not do?" she whispered, mischief and mystery shining in her eyes. "Did you feel delightfully—impenitent?"

"The Queen can do no wrong," Burgess murmured, utterly taken aback. Princesses seemed indeed changeable and human.

"Will you sit down beside me?" she went on, and he obeyed her gesture and took the end of the yellow bench, so that the sun beat on his cheek, though he did not feel it. "I am afraid you are thinking me a very audacious if not a bold person," said the Princess, "absolutely spoiled and headstrong. And you are entirely right,"—she waived his disclaimer,—"quite right. I wanted, suddenly, this morning to talk to you again. I wanted to hear about America. I seldom see very clear reasons for not getting the things I want. Of course, I knew that you might, perhaps, be here. I left Müller below with the carriage this time. I wonder what he thinks! The fact is—I wonder what you think?" She glanced at him half archly, yet with a shadow of doubt in her eyes, but an instant's breathing-space had been vouchsafed to Burgess's adventurous spirit. His emotions were collected.

"I am overwhelmed by the surprise and the pleasure, and by the fulfilment of my wildest dreams," he stated with calm abandon. She looked for irony in his face, but apparently found none, for presently she came a little bit nearer to him on the bench and leaned forward, clasping her hands together on her knees with sudden impetuosity.

"Have you ever been bored?" she inquired.

"Bored? Goodness, yes," he laughed.

"Oh, I don't mean temporarily bored," she said with light intolerance. "You have been bored by missing trains and getting the wrong woman to take out to dinner, and having to go to the tailor's. Of course, I understand that. Have you ever been bored with life?" There was a piteous vehemence in her face. She was desperately sincere.

"If I had, I would have changed it."

"Oh,"—she nodded quickly and the clasped hands went behind her neck,—"then you would not have been really bored, not if you still had the energy to change. That is the worst symptom of the disease—this very real disease, called ennui. One has no energy. It is all



waiting—and for nothing. Life itself is not worth while.” Burgess thought back across swift, busy years.

“I have known more, perhaps, of the other kind of life,” he explained gently, “more of the struggle for existence. It is not a beautiful side. But one cannot complain of monotony.”

“It is the American side,” she exclaimed quickly, “the side I should love to know.”

The blue eyes looked at him eagerly. He rejoiced that she had never dyed the strange, pale lashes through which they gleamed.

“You speak almost as if you were homesick for my country,” he said. “I warn you that most foreigners who really get there are far more critical. Our buildings are too high, our servants too easy, our life too full. It is all the more charming to me that you should praise it so much.”

“Oh, the nostalgia always magnifies. Have you felt it? Have you ever been homesick?”

Burgess smiled and shook his head. “I have looked forward to going back, but I must work there. Can’t you understand the charm of your students’ life over here,—the ‘still air of delightful studies,’ the close organizations, the friendships?”

“The beer-mugs and the foils?” she laughed, and then, pensive,—“never bored, and never homesick!” She looked at him, marvelling. “I am beginning to suspect that you are an extraordinary person. And you will not talk to me about America? The Americans one meets, you know, are so willing to talk about it. They compare things and laws, so seldom to their own disadvantage, but you will not even tell me about yourself!”

Her system was disarming. The man has not been found who will persistently refrain from discussing his own affairs with a sympathetic woman who has beautiful eyes. Under her adroit questions Burgess poured out more of his own hopes and plans, more of himself, than he had even formulated as yet to his own consciousness. It was half an hour before the Princess observed that the sun was setting and that her adventure must come to an end.

“To an end?” Burgess asked, “or only for to-day?”

“We shall see,” she answered gayly, but her friendliness emboldened him.

“I have no right to ask, it is impossible, an unthinkable thing,” he prefaced, “but——”

“Well,—but?” She dared him, and they both watched.

“We are, perhaps, a little lonely. If I might call at the castle?” The Princess studied the red globe of the sun as it disappeared behind the hills.

“That is not quite possible,” she said. “But if you wish to return

my visit, I shall be here, occasionally, in the morning,—I believe it is your place in the afternoons? It was a favorite of mine before you came," she added with a defiant smile,—"*après nous!*"

The future held a new interest, spiced with danger. He followed her again down the steep path to the road, but by silent consent he left her before they had quite come within sight of the impassive footmen, and turned alone up the hill again.

He spent the next morning alone on the Scharfenstein, wondering whether she had stayed away through prudence or coquetry. The day's work was spoiled. But the next morning he climbed the hill again to find her sitting in the broad sunlight on the very edge of the cliff, throwing pebbles into the valley. He pushed through the larches just as she sent a whole handful clattering into the tree-tops beneath her, and she could not hear him come. He held his breath and watched. Tired of aimless effort, she drifted into the more fruitful occupation of knocking cones from the pines with her missiles. The sport was not impaired by the trifling fact that the cone hit was seldom the cone aimed at. The awkward grace of the stiff throws from the elbow, her unconscious jumps and exclamations, kept him spellbound. Presently she began to croon in a sweet little voice, quite out of proportion to her size, an old German song. She did not remember the air, and at the third line tried again and again, missing the key so hopelessly that he could not help joining in. She looked around calmly, and his hand brought her to her feet and drew her to the bench.

"Have you been there long? How long? Were you here yesterday morning? I couldn't come, I was,—never mind. Did you see me hit the cones off? Have you something more to tell me to-day? Have you heard about next year's work? About your professorship?"

His very silence while he waited for her to take breath was in itself a gentle interruption.

"To-day," he said firmly, "we are going to talk about you."

"Such a dull subject!"

"I want to know why. I want to know where you go in the winter. Didn't you say to Berlin, sometimes? You are not bored there?"

"One does the same things each year, one meets the same people. We come back here very early, and, in the autumn, Carlsbad or Baden. That is the worst of all. You eat a crust, take a mud bath, and walk two hours for a glass of brine. Sometimes we go to Florence after that. Berlin is very bad in the early winter."

"But, surely, you enjoy the social life there, the music, the play. It all seems so exciting to me, you see."

"I—we are very busy. One has responsibilities. It is not gay; our daily life is very dull," she insisted. "It is better here. We can

be out-of-doors; but it is long,—long! I suppose life means denial,—‘Entbehren sollst Du!’”

“Nothing ever seemed so strange to me as that you should find life tiresome,” Burgess said. “You seem to have, as the French say, all for you—birth, wealth. You come to me from another world! I can think of you as a dream,—I can look at you as if you were a picture,—I am so sure that you can be nothing to me, not even a friend.”

The Princess must have heard many soldiers’ bald compliments, as well as many old diplomats’ delicate ones, Burgess thought. He could not understand why his simple speech had so distressed her. She rose and, keeping her back to him, turned to the path behind the bench.

“Your Highness! I entreat! How stupid of me! Your pardon,” he stammered. She gave him her hand, and he saw that her eyes were full of tears.

“It is nothing—it is something else,” she faltered. “Will you let me go down alone, now, please? Will you stay here? Will you please not follow? Indeed, indeed, I am not offended—a little frightened, a little confused——”

She was gone, through the soft larches, down the hill. Burgess went back to the *försterei* by way of the Brocken Valley. The long tramp had stayed his nerves. He was just in time for the early supper of black bread and boiled eggs. There was a strange glory in the gold yolks and a new sweetness in the black loaf, but he vowed that it should not last, that he would not allow his mind to be distracted, and a blue film to be drawn over his life, to punish him for a few rosy hours. He ate very heartily and smoked very hard with the forester after supper, until the twilight had faded and the garden-paths were quite dim. And then he went to bed and dreamed that the Princess of Bergesthal was keeping house for him in a small western university town, that they had waffles studded with turquoises for dinner, and that his wife’s brother-in-law, the Emperor of Germany, had asked for a second portion.

As July slipped by and August came in the last roll of proof went down to the Göttingen printer, and Burgess knew that his vacation was near its end. The day came when the tissue-paper plans of steamship companies encumbered his desk. In honor of his impending departure the Herr Förster agreed to climb the Felsen-Klippe, and on the way back stop for beer and an open-air concert.

Like most of the Harz climbs the Felsen-Klippe offered nothing formidable in the way of an ascent. The woodland paths were softly carpeted. The red-tails whirled across their shoulders; wild rabbits jumped from under their feet, and even a deer or two rustled away at their approach, in annoyance rather than terror.

Everyone knows that a man can always control his own thoughts, and may decline to consider unprofitable subjects. But dreams are not thoughts, and our rosiest dreams are those of our last waking moments. There comes a time when a reckoning is demanded, when the day-dreams will persist, and spoil "A morning's task with longing wild and vain." And Burgess had a note in his pocket.

It was an impersonal, formal little note of regret and farewell. For two weeks it had burned there. He could keep his fingers from drawing it out and holding it before his eyes, but he could not force them to tear it across. So there it lay, and burned. And a letter, even the smallest letter, is a wonderful, tangible thing. His thoughts, given free rein, were busily whirling about the forbidden subject as they neared the café, where the concert was already in progress. When he saw the princely carriage waiting on the other side of the road he was suddenly conscious of having hoped for and half-expected this very possibility.

The Princess was sitting with the pretty Englishwoman, and another older attendant, at an isolated table on the outer edge of the crowd. Two waiters hovered reverentially in the background. She was sipping chocolate and listening to the band. When the forester and Burgess took a table still farther from the music, she turned her head a little, and although no recognition was possible, he knew that she had seen him. She whispered a little consciously with her companion, who made a suggestion at which they both laughed. Then they listened discreetly to the end of the piece. Then the Princess rose and went alone across the road to the carriage. She did not glance at Burgess as she passed.

With a murmured apology to the forester, he followed her. She had said "home" to the man, but Burgess laid his hand on the wheel. His resolutions were as dew under the morning sun.

"I am going away to-morrow," he said quickly in English. "I must see you again."

"I am coming back in ten minutes," she answered.

"And you won't ask me to get in?" The Princess glanced at her servants and at the two women in the café garden. They were absorbed in their chocolate and in each other. Only the forester had risen and was staring after Burgess in amazement.

"Come," she said recklessly. He sprang to the seat facing her, and they rolled around the curve and down the valley, along the straight white road to Bergesthal. Burgess looked into her eyes with a grim laugh.

"Such is impulse," he remarked, in low, angry tones. "I prayed never to see you again. I battled to forget you. I seize the first chance, without stopping for decency and order."

Her hands were trembling. Her foot tapped the carriage floor. She too was angry, but she kept her eyes to his.

"Good-by," she said. "You are never coming back?"

"It makes a little difference to any woman," he went on, "taking a man's life that way. I don't want to trouble yours, but I might as well tell you. And I'm not sorry I knew you, either. Of course, I ought to be, but I'm not. And you can't help it." He stared with bright eyes at the white road behind them.

"Don't think of it again," he begged considerably. But the Princess's eyes were bright too.

"Perhaps I too,—a little," she faltered. He held his hand up in sharp forbidding.

"Oh, please!" he broke in. "Of course, I have thought of that—dreamed of it. There is no way. No way at all. There is no other way out. *That* would only make it worse. You hardly know me,—the adventure would seem a little excitement to you. I must go out of your life at once. It has all been such a foolish mistake,"—perhaps just then an echo rang in his mind,—“and yet, how sweet it was!” He looked at her mistily, and ended, in feeble anti-climax, “I must get out of the carriage. Stop!” he called to the coachman. But the Princess contradicted him at once.

"Drive faster!" she cried. "Stop at the turret door."

He made as if to jump.

"Not such a good-by," she whispered, a finger on his sleeve. "I will drive you back to the concert, to your forester friend. We will not speak of this again. Indeed, indeed, it will be easier for me if you will stay where you are!"

He leaned back in his seat, wondering, as men do, if women never know when an incident should be closed. Was it really the fear of a little awkwardness that made her keep him there? He was as sincerely anxious to get away, he told himself, as he had been hungry to see her again. But as for the Princess, she seemed to have lost all sense of the imprudence in their relations. Her face flushed and glowed, but not with embarrassment. In silence they came to the cross-roads, left the straight white road which fled down the valley to Bergesthal, and swept up the hillside drive gently sloping to the castle. Beyond the gates of the old feudal wall they turned into a small, ivied court, and stopped in front of a turret, whose stair was guarded by a portcullis. The footman rang a bell, which jangled noisily in some distant corridor, and the portcullis was raised. Burgess helped the Princess to the ground, but as a window above them flew open she hastily pulled her hand free and turned her back on him.

"You are there, Cotta?" she called. "Send me down——"

But an old man's head appeared out of the casement.

"Your Highness!" she exclaimed.

"Has Ilse been sick again?" he demanded.

"Not at all. She sent me back for her purse."

"Oh! I saw the carriage. You were driving much too fast for the hill, dear Miss Brown." His deprecating smile was coquettish and senile. "I was afraid this young man might be a doctor. I had quite a fright."

"I beg your Highness's pardon. He is a compatriot of mine, a Mr. Burgess."

"Indeed!" ejaculated the old Prince. "Please drive back more slowly."

Burgess bowed as in a dream. The casement flew shut. Then he stood under the portcullis, facing her, waiting. And at last she lifted her eyes to his, and made an eloquent gesture with both hands.

"Well," she said, "you see!"



## THE NECKLACE

BY CLARENCE URMV

**H**AND-CLASPED with dreams, I sought both far and near  
 For jewels for my chain;  
 Hand-clasped with dreams, no task was too severe  
 Or could my steps detain.

I found one stone within a steadfast star,  
 Another in a rose,  
 One lay beneath a deep-set, moaning bar  
 Where beat a tide of woes.

Some passed to me from out an angel's hand,  
 Some from a dreamland tree,  
 And one day, walking in an alien land,  
 A stranger gave me three!

Close hidden in a tear-dewed violet  
 I found a priceless prize;  
 My fairest gem reflects the love-light set  
 Within a dear one's eyes.

And now, the jewels burnished, golden-bound,  
 For me their charm diffuse  
 In rarest rainbow gleams that glow around  
 The white throat of my Muse!

# JACK SHEPPARD, OF NEWGATE

*By Charles Morris*

*Author of "Half-Hours with the Best American Authors"*



## I.

NEVER had famous old Newgate, that most venerable of prisons, known during its seven centuries of existence a sensation like that which came to it on the morning of October 17, 1724, when Henry Austin, one of the turnkeys, opened the door of the dungeon-like cell known as the "castle strong-room." Here, the day before, he had left an important convict in absolute security, as he believed, for bolts, bars, and fetters were combined to hold the captive safely "in durance vile." Yet, to his utter astonishment, not alone had the prisoner vanished, but the floor of the cell was covered with what, to the staring eyes of the turnkey, seemed cartloads of bricks, stone, and mortar, the débris of an extraordinary escape.

The loud cry of surprise which broke from Austin's lips brought all the prison warders within hearing in hot haste to his aid. When they beheld the cause of his outcry they stood agape, "like men deprived of their senses," to quote from the "Newgate Calendar." Had some of the genii of enchantment whisked the prisoner bodily away through walls and ceiling no more extraordinary evidences of his flight could have remained.

The pursuit of the fugitive, which they hastily began, added greatly to their astonishment. No fewer than six great doors of solid oak, iron-studded, stood staringly open, with their massive locks broken into pieces and strewn over the floors. One of them had not been opened for seven years, yet the fleeing convict had gone through it as though it were a thing of pasteboard. Finally the bewildered pursuers reached the prison roof, and here found a blanket hanging to the roof of the nearest of the houses which crowded in upon Newgate on both sides. Here ended the quest. It was evident that the fugitive was far beyond their reach.

The tidings of this extraordinary event spread rapidly through the prison. To officers and prisoners alike they brought excitement—that of dismay to the former, of enjoyment to the latter. The grim walls of Newgate vibrated as they had rarely done before as the story of the escape made its way through the crowded wards.

As for Henry Austin, the derelict turnkey, he passed a sorry quarter of an hour when he stood in sheep-faced silence before Sir William Gloucester, Newgate's portly governor, and heard his sharply accented comments upon the disturbing affair. After the downcast culprit had been dismissed, the irate Governor turned to a visitor who had listened with interest and amusement to the animated colloquy.

"A deuce of an ugly job this, Sir John," he said. "I'd turn the whole worthless gang adrift if I could be sure of laying hands on any better."

"I should think that fetters, bars, and bolts ought to be enough to hold any ordinary man, without need of the keeper's eye in addition," answered the visitor, Sir John Brownlow. "Chained to the floor too, your man said. Is that your usual idea of a holdfast?"

"Not exactly, but Jack Sheppard is not a usual felon. He is so notorious for his escapes that we felt it necessary to take extraordinary pains in his case. Prison life is native to the fellow, but no jail yet has been found strong enough to contain him. He has some half-dozen jail-breakings to his credit already, but none so remarkable as this. The rascal is little more than a boy, but it is only a month or two since he gave me the slip before."

"How was that done?" asked Sir John with much interest.

"Easily enough, as it seemed. Some women visitors supplied him with a file or a saw, with which he cut through an iron spike crossing the hatch in the top of his cell. They came again the next day, when he broke off the spike, squeezed his head and shoulders through the hatch, and was pulled up by his lady friends."

"And where were your men while this interesting game was being played?"

"In the gate lodge: at lunch, they say; more likely at beer. At any rate, he got past and out the gate without being seen."

"I beg pardon," said Sir John. "I know nothing about your system of prison discipline, but——"

"But you think it a very loose one," broke in Gloucester with some heat. "Well, I did not make it, and cannot change it. For centuries past visitors have been freely admitted to Newgate, and some of our well-to-do inmates hold regular receptions. But I do not know of any other case in which visitors helped a prisoner to escape."

"I can well believe that you are not responsible for the custom," responded Sir John. "And in this case your man seems to have got away with no help but his own. Come, friend Gloucester, I should like to see this weasel's track."

"As a visitor, eh? Then you must promise to help no more of my babes out of the wood."



The rotund Governor laughed at his own witticism as he lifted his body out of his capacious chair and led the way towards the cells.

The scene of devastation they witnessed astonished Sir John as much as it had his predecessors. It seemed incredible that any one man, destitute of suitable tools, could have accomplished so much in so brief a period. As they passed from room to room and observed the solid strength of the doors through which Sheppard had made his way their surprise augmented. In view of the special precautions taken to secure the prisoner, his flight seemed little short of miraculous. How it was performed, indeed, was but half understood until it was boastfully told by Sheppard himself, after his rearrest.

## II.

WE cannot do better than tell the story of his marvellous exploit in Jack Sheppard's own way and in part in his own words.

When the turnkey left his cell on the day of the escape, the captive knew well that he was safe from a further visit till the next morning. He was also aware that he was the only inmate of that section of Newgate, and could work without danger of being heard. The sound of Austin's steps had barely died away before he sought to put into effect his secret purpose.

His fettered hands and feet, the linked chain that bound him to the floor, the thick stone walls, the narrow crevices through which light entered the cell, the iron-studded door, seemed enough to appal the most resolute jail-breaker, yet Sheppard viewed them with a feeling akin to contempt. The clang of the shooting bolt was still in his ears when he began the effort to rid himself of his handcuffs. Seizing the connecting-link between his strong teeth, he squeezed his hands as small as possible, and readily slipped them through the irons—a feat not difficult to those whose hands are little larger than their wrists.

This done, he twisted round and round the chain that fastened him to the floor, and finally, with a great exertion of strength, he snapped asunder by a sharp jerk the link by which it was attached to the staple. In little more than five minutes' time the dexterous criminal had set at naught the extra precautions taken to hold him secure.

It was a relief to his cramped limbs to be able to move freely about the room. But there remained the annoyance of the long chain, which dragged behind him with a clattering sound. It was beyond his power to break this again, and the best he could do was to draw the rings of the fetters up to his calves, and with the aid of his stockings to bind the chain firmly to his legs.

"That was one good job finished," said Sheppard. "Then I looked around me to see what was to be done next. There were two ways to get out of the cell, by the door and the chimney. I chose the chimney

for the easiest, and up it I went, climbing for daylight. But I was not far up before my head came plump against something hard enough to knock me silly. I felt up and found it was an iron bar, which some hog of a mason had built into the walls."

Here was a serious obstacle. He must get rid of the bar or escape by that channel would be hopeless. But Sheppard was a man fertile in expedients. Quickly descending, he set to work upon the chimney wall with a piece of his broken chain, picking out the bricks and mortar until he had opened a wide cavity and loosened the outer end of the bar. Seizing this, he worked it back and forward with his strong arms until it became loose in its socket, and finally, by main strength, pulled it out.

All this was no light task. It took hours of time and labor. Its results were visible in what the astounded eyes of the turnkey had magnified into cartloads of rubbish. But Sheppard was amply repaid for the effort, not only in opening a passage, but in obtaining a useful help in the shape of an iron bar an inch thick and nearly a yard long. Such an implement was likely to be of the utmost service in hands like his.

The route by the chimney thus opened, up it he went to the level of the floor above, and here again began a mining operation, cutting a hole through the wall, whose débris clattered down into the cell he had just left. Crawling through the hole, when large enough to admit his body, he found himself in a chamber known, in Newgate parlance, as the Red Room. On its floor lay a large nail, which he hastened to add to his treasures, using it immediately in an effort to pick the lock of the door. This failing, he made an assault on the outer plate of the lock, which he wrenched off so as to expose the bolt. This he pushed back with his fingers, and in a minute more was out of the room.

"I was now like a cat in a strange garret," said Sheppard, continuing his narrative. "I knew no more where I was than the man in the moon. But, by good luck, that part of Newgate was empty, and not an ear had heard all the noise I had made. Night was coming on too, so I felt pretty safe.

"The place I was in seemed to be a passage between the rooms. At its end I found myself up against another door. This had no lock; but there was no give to it, so I saw that it must be fastened by a bolt on the inside. That didn't trouble me long. All I had to do was to dig a hole through the wall, thrust in my hand, and push back the bolt. The next minute I found myself in a place I well knew. It was the preaching-place—what they call the chapel,—and I found something there of more use to me than preaching, and this was a big spike which some kind soul had left for me on the floor."

A door leading out from the opposite side of the chapel was next forced by the fugitive. It admitted him to an entry which ran be-

tween the chapel wall and the lower leads. For the remainder of his devious journey we may follow the succinct account given in the "Tyburn Calendar:"

"The door of this entry was very strong and fastened with a great lock. What was worse, the night had now overtaken him, and he was forced to work in the dark. However, in half an hour, by the help of the great nail, the chapel spike, and the iron bar, he forced off the box of the lock and opened the door; which led him to another yet more difficult, for it was not only locked, but barred and bolted. When he had tried in vain to make this lock and box give way, he wrenched the fillet from the main post of the door and the box and staples came off with it. . . . There was yet another door between him and the lower leads, but it being bolted withinside he opened it easily, and, mounting to the top of it, he got over the wall and so to the upper leads."

The indefatigable sapper and miner had now reached the outer air. London lay spread widely before him, a gloom-enveloped mass. Beneath his feet was the roof of a house occupied by one Bird, a turner by trade. But the roof lay at a lower level, and to drop to it might mean a wrenched or broken limb or an alarm-cry from its inmates. Jack Sheppard had come too far and dared too many perils to risk the loss of the fruits of his enterprise in any such manner as this.

"There was only one thing for it," he said, if we may let him again take up the thread of his narrative. "I couldn't take that jump and I couldn't stay where I was. I had left a blanket in my room, and I cursed myself for a fool for not bringing it along. It was a jolly risk to go back for it, but I wanted that blanket very badly, and back I went.

"I can tell you, that was a scary trip. It was pitch dark and I had to feel my way at every step, while every scrap of noise I made sounded like a sledge-hammer. I was as nervous as an old woman when she sees a ghost, and when I got down the chimney and crawled out over the rubbish I was shaking like a leaf in a gale. I got the blanket and went back on the run. The scare was in my bones and made me act more like a baby than a man.

"When I smelt the out-door air again I felt like another man. It didn't take me more than a minute to fasten a corner of the blanket to the roof and slide down it to the top of Bird's house. In another minute my shoes were off and I was inside a garret window, crawling like a cat. It is ugly work, I can tell you, going through a dark house and feeling for the stairs, not knowing but you may topple down head foremost. But I got to the street without waking a soul; and that's the end of my story."

Thus was achieved perhaps the most remarkable instance of "jail delivery" on record. We are dealing now with fact, not with fiction of

the "Monte Cristo" type. Every incident of Jack Sheppard's famous escape, as here told, is based on the genuine Newgate records.

III.

BUT we cannot leave the hero of our tale in outer darkness at the turner's door. We must follow him through the remainder of his short but adventurous career. Bold, skilful, and full of expedients as he was, a reckless spirit and love of liquor proved his ruin. Scarce two weeks passed before he was again under bolt and bar within Newgate gaol.

His pocket empty and the instinct of theft ingrained in him, he had returned to his old work, and before the week ended had committed more than one small robbery. His final exploit was to break into a pawnbroker's shop, from the shelves of which he equipped himself with a fine suit, with accompaniment of sword and snuff-box, with cash enough to get royally drunk the next day. This, in connection with the reward that had been offered for him, soon brought him back into the hands of justice.

"He was very drunk when he was returned to the jail," say the Newgate records, "carried himself insolently, and defied the keepers to hold him with all their irons, art, and skill."

Sheppard had made himself a hero, not only of the common people, but even of the well-born. His extraordinary escape had given him the greatest notoriety, and for the time scarcely anything else was talked of in London. It became the fashion to visit him in his cell and hear the story of his exploit from his own lips. Even noblemen were present at his daily receptions, and the keepers of Newgate reaped a small fortune from the gratuities of those who were eager to see this master workman in his peculiar art.

It did Sheppard become that Sir James Thornhill, an eminent painter of the period, and the instructor of the still more eminent Hogarth, had been to sit for his portrait. Of this a mezzotint copy was made which had a large sale. The notoriety of the new aspirant for fame was also taken advantage of by authors, no less than seven illustrated narratives of his career being published, to the profit of writers and publishers alike. A poet of the time went so far as to compose a tribute to Thornhill, published in the *British Journal*, in whose closing lines Sheppard, the jail-breaker, is given equal rank with some of the most famous of conquerors:

"Apelles Alexander drew,  
Cæsar is to Aurelius due,  
Cromwell in Lilly's works does shine,  
And Sheppard, Thornhill, lives in thine."

The effect of Sheppard's marvellous exploit upon the authorities was as great as that upon the public, though different in character. They paid the youthful jail-bird the compliment of becoming genuinely alarmed. This feeling, indeed, seems to have reached the throne itself, for the King and the Secretary of State deemed it necessary to give orders for the speedy trial and execution of the recaptured culprit. It is well to say that in those days burglary was one of the many capital crimes, death by the rope being its penalty.

The trial was speedy, the conviction and sentence as speedy, and the date of execution was placed only six days forward. It was then November 10. Sheppard was sentenced to die on the gibbet at Tyburn on November 16. It was further ordered that during this brief interval he should be guarded with extraordinary care. The authorities were going to take no more chances with the redoubtable Jack Sheppard. In addition to being again fettered to the floor, two guards were placed in his cell, with strict orders to watch him day and night.

Though such extreme care may have been superfluous, vigilance was needed, for the prisoner was still hopeful of escape. In some unknown way he had obtained a penknife, with which he proposed, while in the cart on his way to Tyburn, to cut his bonds at a place called Little Turnstile. Here was a narrow passage which the mounted guards could not traverse, and into which he intended to dart and run for his life. Unluckily for him, the knife was found on his person just before Newgate was left, and this final plan was defeated.

It is even said that some of his friends had agreed to cut him down promptly after the hanging, with the hope of restoring him to life. But if any such doubtful scheme existed, the savage proceedings of the mob after the execution effectually frustrated it.

The multitude which collected at Tyburn to witness the execution of the famous criminal was immense, and was un<sup>id</sup> woman when she to the finish. All we need say of the gruesome business of the hanging is that Sheppard kept his cool courage to the end, and died without a quiver of fear.

The passions of the mob were aroused by a rumor that the undertaker, who appeared with a hearse to carry off the body for burial, really proposed to take it to a surgeon's dissecting-room. Such a report was sufficient, in the state of feeling that prevailed, to create trouble. Sheppard had been exalted into a popular hero, and his admirers did not propose that any dishonor should be done to his body. With a wild surge they broke in, demolished the hearse, and pummelled the undertaker till he was barely able to escape with his life. Seizing the body, the infuriated throng carried it off and flung it from hand to hand in their frantic excitement till it was covered with mud and bruises.

In the end it was learned that the rumor had been started in the

interest of the surgeons, and that the undertaker whom the mob had assailed had been sent by the authorities and really intended burial. These tidings added to the fury of the multitude, and a riot succeeded which became so formidable that the military had to be called out to aid the police in quelling it. Finally the body was given to a friend of the deceased for burial, the disorderly throng broke up to follow it to St. Martin's Fields, and there it was left under a guard of soldiers and eventually interred.

Thus in wild excitement and savage display of mob frenzy closed the career of Jack Sheppard, the most famous among the tribe of jail-breakers.



## DISCORD

BY CLARENCE URMV

**A**S o'er an untuned lyre I swept my hand  
And through my soul the jangling sounds were poured,  
I thought I could a little understand  
Of God's great grief when heart-strings do not chord,  
As, bending from His throne, He singles out  
A thrice-blest player, bids him strike the strings—  
When lo, instead of concord, din of doubt,  
Babel of griefs, and cry of bitter things!



## POLLY'S BEDTIME

BY ROBERT GILBERT WELSH

**W**HEN Polly tumbles into bed  
Across her room the fairies creep,  
And silently around her spread  
A soft gray gown of sleep.

Some nights they bring a different dress,  
All sewn with stars and silver seams,  
With moon-rays spangled o'er,—I guess  
It is a robe of dreams.

## “NUMBER 321”

*By Lucy Baker Jerome*



**H**E had been sentenced for three years, and now they were ended. Thrice during those three years his wife had come to him. Once she had brought Barton. She was coming to-day, he remembered. He wondered if Barton would come as well. He, dull and worn, conscious only of frightful monotony, the harsh clang of the prison-bell, the changeless rigidity of the lock-step, which had left him less a man than a machine, had waited stupidly as the days went by. She, slender, fair-haired, and with unfathomable eyes, stood outside the walls, on this last day, counting the seconds, which dragged interminably.

The prison-bell clanged six. Precisely on the last stroke of the trembling monster the huge iron gates swung slowly inward, the figure of a man slouched through, keeping step to a soundless rhythm, and the gates clashed to behind him, with a vibrating sweep that sent the blood racing through his veins.

The woman by the roadside waited, pressing one hand hard against her heart. The advancing figure looked anxiously about, and then, with a swift little rush, came quickly down the road. He limped slightly, and his back was bowed, but he hurried eagerly forward.

“Molly! Molly!” he exclaimed wildly. “At last! All these years, and now——”

He drew back at the chill touch of her lips.

“What is it?” he instinctively asked.

The man in the background held out his hand.

“Well, Fraser,” he said heartily, “glad to see you, old chap. Not quite up to the mark, are you?” he added sympathetically; “but we’ll soon make that right.”

For an instant the old Fraser appeared through the prison mask. He involuntarily straightened himself, and his eyes sought his wife’s.

“Thanks, Barton,” he said quietly. Then, with a tender ring in his voice,—

“Aren’t you glad, Molly?” he asked beseechingly.

“Of course, Jim,” answered Molly quietly. “Why shouldn’t I be glad when my husband is free from prison walls?”

“But, Molly,” he stammered, “you—you speak so oddly!”

"Do I?" She laughed a little. "It's your imagination, Jim. Let's sit down on this rock a while. I'm so tired," she added drearily.

He looked at her with close attention. Barton's figure was visible rounding a headland a few feet away.

"You're a little pulled down, Molly, dear, but we'll have you right again in no time," he said cheerfully. "Now that I'm free to use my brains once more, you and Margie sha'n't want for anything. How is Margie?" he suddenly asked.

"She's well," his wife answered listlessly.

He took off his hat, baring his head to the twilight breeze. The bay lay rippling in the distance, before a background of gold and purple hills. He drew a long breath.

"How good—how good it seems to be abroad once more! Hadn't we better be going, Molly? What about the boats?"

His wife kept her eyes fixed on a tuft of yellow daisies at her feet. Her voice was very low.

"Where are you going, Jim?"

"Where am I going!" He stared at her in amazement. "Why, home, of course. Molly, what's the matter with you?"

She sprang to her feet and faced him fiercely, her loosened hair blowing in the wind.

"You're not coming to my home!" she cried, a bitter, concentrated ring of rage in her clear tones. "You're not coming to mine! Do you think, James Fraser, that I've toiled and slaved all these years that you might have a comfortable place in which to throw off your prison fetters at your leisure? Do you think that this shame and disgrace mean nothing to me—the knowledge that our name is blighted, and that, wherever we go, we are likely to be pointed at and scorned? Do you think I can brush this knowledge aside, as I would brush away a fly? Do you think I have enjoyed slaving ten hours a day, with this remembrance raging at my heart and brain! And what does your coming out mean to me," she cried shrilly, her eyes aflame and her bosom heaving. "It means ruin—ruin. Margie and I have moved. People where we are now don't know you. They don't even know that I have a husband! They respect us, and now our lives will be ruined for the second time, and—by your hand!"

At her first words Fraser had sprung up like a man shot through the heart. He swayed as he stood leaning heavily against the rock.

"Molly!" he gasped. "You never said——"

"No, I never said anything," she interrupted. "It's been eating my heart out, and you never even suspected it. I never can live with you again," she said coldly. Her eyes repelled him.

She extracted a shabby pocket-book from her dress, and with shaking fingers undid the fastenings. "I have brought you some money," she



said shortly. "I do this, as I have done all the rest, because you were once my husband, and because I still bear your name, but now I have done my duty, and this is the end of it." She extended the money rigidly.

He tossed it contemptuously over the rock. The beautiful virgin sky had suddenly grown dark. With a fierce pang, he felt a wild rush of longing for the solitude of his prison cell. At this moment his wife seemed less a woman to him than a disturbing element in his long-cherished plans. He flushed darkly. To wait three years—for this!

He crossed over and laid one arm on her bowed shoulders.

"Molly," he said huskily, "Molly, you don't know what you're saying—you don't know what you're doing. There hasn't been an hour in the day or night that I haven't been planning for you and Margie. My God! You knew I was innocent—you knew I didn't take the money. What if all the others believed me guilty! You knew,—you didn't doubt me!" He stooped entreatingly. His eyes besought her.

"Come, Moll," he said gently, "let us go home."

She looked at the blue vault above, where the stars were beginning to tremble. The croak of the crickets came shrilly to her ears.

"I can't," she said sombrely,—“I can't. Every stitch that I put into that hateful coarse sewing seemed to take me farther away from you. Oh!” she suddenly cried out, “let me go! Let me go!” She twisted her hands convulsively. “You don't know—you can't understand! When I saw you coming through that prison gate my every instinct repudiated you. ‘Jim's dead,’ something said to me. This man in the prison rags is nothing to you. He can't be—now. Don't you see?” she wailed heart-brokenly. “It's repulsion—repulsion for you!”

The man was trembling like a wounded animal. Long bars of rose-colored light were filtering across the landscape, and they seemed like separate shafts of fire aimed directly at him. The sound of her low sobbing hardly reached his dulled ears. With a miserable gesture he raised his torn hat as he stumbled blindly away.

Barton, approaching from the opposite direction, stared in blank bewilderment at the retreating figure.

“Good heavens!” he ejaculated. “Where's he going?”

“He's going out of my existence,” replied Molly simply.

Barton whirled round on her. “What do you mean?” he abruptly inquired.

Molly stood at bay. She knew Barton well enough to divine how her attitude would affect him, and she hesitated to reveal it. Already, in her mind, little clouds of doubt were forming. In these three years Barton had been her friend and stay, the sustaining, helpful figure in

the foreground of her existence. At this juncture, half unconsciously, she looked to him. Her eyes were imploring, but Barton affected not to observe it. She answered him desperately,—

"We—I don't think Jim and I are suited to each other any more," she said miserably.

Barton was honestly shocked.

"You didn't think that this morning," he rejoined, steadily avoiding her eyes.

"He isn't the man I married," said Molly stubbornly, "and oh, I wish I were dead!" she burst out, in a frenzy of grief and mortification at the unlooked-for events of the last few hours.

"He's your husband," said Barton sternly, hurt that his unacknowledged ideal of womanhood could be found wanting. "I don't know anything about a woman's love," he said bitterly, "but I know how a man would feel," he added, his pity for his friend carrying him away.

A look of acutest pain swept over Molly's blanched face.

"You don't understand—you don't know," she said convulsively. "I don't love him any longer. I wish I did—I wish I did!" she repeated in agony.

"Poor Jim—poor old fellow!" said Barton regretfully, the sympathy in his voice goading her to despair. He seated himself on an adjacent rock and began thoughtfully punching holes in the turf with his stick. He did not meet her eyes.

"I remember," he said reflectively, "something Jim once said to me that time you were so very ill. He was pretty white, and his eyes had the same hurt look I saw in them to-day. 'Barton,' he said, 'if my wife dies, it's all up with me'—and I could hear him saying that for a week afterwards; and when you were out of danger the whole office knew it, just by the glorified look on his face."

He cast a quick glance at the motionless figure by the rock, but her hands were clinched, and she did not answer.

"And when Margie was born," Barton went on, "there wasn't anything good enough for that little morsel. He used to stand worrying the fruit pedlers merely because they hadn't got an apple big enough and red enough and round enough to dangle before her eyes. I suppose," he went on interrogatively, "you remember that big fire on Main Street about six years ago? It was all in the papers, of course, and, well—the fireman whose life Jim saved by that leap into a blazing hell thinks a good deal of Jim even yet. I don't know that you ever heard," he resumed softly, "what were Jim's first words as soon as he could speak. 'Don't tell Molly,' he said gently, and when you did come he tried to hide his burned hands so as not to frighten you."

Dry-eyed, she was gazing down the road.

"And when Margie began to walk," said Barton genially, "you

couldn't help enjoying it with him. He kept count of every step, and the boys in the office kept tally too. It must have hurt him when he thought that he shouldn't see Margie any more. Yes," he added musingly, "that must have been hard on Jim."

His glance wandered down the lonely road. Silent and empty, it stretched away into the gloom of the gathering night. In the stillness they heard the solitary plashing of the waves. He rose and faced Molly doubtfully.

"Shall we go now, Mrs. Fraser?" he politely asked. "We can make the eight-fifteen."

She broke from him with a little cry. The next instant she was running swiftly down the road.

"Jim!" she called eagerly. "Jim!" Her voice floated over the darkening reach of water. Barton, in the distance, saw her stumble, fall, recover herself, and press hurriedly forward. On and on she sped, peering into every clump of bush, searching behind great bowlders, straining her eyes over the dusty road which lay before her, white and bare. Molly felt that her heart was bursting. Oh, if God would only forgive her, and let her find Jim before (the thought was agony) it might be too late! Little clouds of dust rose and swirled about her; her eyes were blinded, her breath came in short, quick gasps, but she hurried on. What had he meant to do when he had turned away like that? She could see the look in his eyes now. And she had driven him away—her Jim! She stopped—exhausted and panting.

"Jim!" she cried again, the wildness of despair in her tone. "Dear Jim! Where are you?"

Then she turned the corner and saw him. He was coming quickly towards her, and the light of a great gladness had dawned in his tired eyes.

Like one stricken with unspeakable yearning, she held out her arms.

Barton did not make the eight-fifteen.



## THE EMPTY CUP

BY H. TALBOT KUMMER

I WAS athirst for Love—my mouth was parched—  
For one drop, as the earth in summer drought.  
Fate held a golden goblet to my lips—  
Empty—but set with sparkling gems about.

# A SLENDER SHEAF OF MEMORIES

*By Senex*



FOR half a century I have had in my possession two letters, each in a handwriting familiar to the public, and each bearing unmistakably the stamp of a well-known personality. Brief as they are, there is room for a touch of autobiography in these notes of Carlyle and Thackeray to a young disciple and literary aspirant. It is in the accent of the "don't" which the veteran of literature has always ready for the volunteer, in the mingled deprecation and encouragement, in the earnestness of admonition on the one hand, and in the pathos of regret on the other.

The letters have never been published, although James Hannay, to whom they are addressed, referred to the Thackeray letter and quoted a phrase from it in an article published in London soon after the death of the novelist and reprinted by Mr. R. H. Stoddard in his "Anecdote Biographies of Thackeray and Dickens," forming a volume of the "Bric-a-Brac Series." In printing them now I am tempted to add some lines of reminiscence; not of the writers: the record of such personal intercourse as I had with them lies buried anonymously in the strata of old periodicals, from which Mr. Stoddard exhumed a sketch to reprint in the above-mentioned volume. It is rather of Hannay himself that I would talk a little, the man to whom the letters are addressed, one who made no enduring mark in literature, but whose personality and talent are a vivid memory to me, as, doubtless, to others who knew him.

Carlyle is writing to a fellow-countryman. James Hannay was born in Dumfries in 1827, the son of David Hannay, a man of education and literary tastes, who was engaged in business in that town. There was a tradition of descent from some ancient Scottish family of the name with a poet in its line, and it was part of a sort of passionate romance in James Hannay that he cherished the legend, and had always a strong interest in genealogical matters and sense of the importance of "family."

"There is always a chance for a gentleman if he has an atom of sentiment in him," he has written somewhere; and this creed of the

saving grace of sentiment and the qualities of a gentleman, rather defiantly put forth, carried with it many minor virtues, loyalty, good feeling, devotion to high ideals, all visible and lovable amid the vicissitudes of the Bohemia in which he was living at the time I knew him. He belonged to that portion of our generation (the generation that was young fifty years ago) in whom a belief in Carlyle and Emerson was a mighty tide and trend of the whole being: who were ready to shatter conventions in defence of these prophets; while the sage of Chelsea, feeling that human impulse was weak and that little of real moment was achieved, often snubbed Philistines and disciples alike; while he of Concord, serene in the perception of higher compensations, looked with charity and equanimity upon both. Carlyle's letter is an acknowledgment of some literary tribute. It is enclosed in a small blue envelope bearing a red seal with the device of two horse-heads and the motto "Humilitate." On the envelope is a memorandum: "received Oct. 4th. '49," which shows that the post must have carried it quickly to the address,—

"James Hannay Esq.

"Bridge Cottage

"Barnet

"Hants."

"CHELSEA 4 Oct 1849.

"DEAR SIR: I have,—though not till yesterday owing to long absence from home,—read your little paper in the *Mirror*; which is very well indeed, very promising and meritorious on your part; and to myself exhibits an exaggerated loyalty and generous good-will that surely deserves my gratitude. I well remember your father at Annan and three of your uncles (good men, if they be living now); and it excites many thoughts, some of which are grave enough in character, that a son of David Hannay's is one of my critics and eulogists now!

"I read very few new books or periodicals; and have seen none of your works but this piece of writing. If you are decided to follow literature as a practical employment,—which I should by no manner of means advise if you were *not* decided,—you will either give up such notions as these that dictated the paper on me, or else prepare yourself for one of the fiercest struggles, successful or not! I wish you the best 'success,' that of growing, in this pursuit or in other fruitfuller ones, to your full spiritual stature under God's sky;—and am, with many kind regards,

"Yours sincerely,

"T. CARLYLE."

Thackeray's letter is without date and there is no memorandum on the envelope, which has neither stamp nor postmark. The address, which is not in Thackeray's handwriting, is to

*"James Hannay Esq.*

*"11 Arlington St.*

*"Mornington Crescent*

*"Camden Town."*

It may have been forwarded in another enclosure, but the allusion in the letter itself to Hannay's residence at Hadley makes it seem probable that the envelope is one into which the letter had been put by accident. It was given to me, with that from Carlyle, in the autumn of 1850. On my way back from England I showed it to a Boston lady on the steamer, who stigmatized a passage in it as "coarse;" but perhaps Thackeray's coarseness can be tolerated in the twentieth century even in Boston.

"KENSINGTON June 29. (1850)

"MY DEAR MR. HANNAY: The publisher hasn't sent me the King;\* and I ordered it of my bookseller here who forgot me: so that I'm as yet without a knowledge of any but No. 1, part of which I thought was excellent. I hope the rest is as good. A naval captain told me of it the other day, lauding it highly but saying the author was too savage. I suppose we all begin so. I know one who did: and who is sorry now for pelting at that poor old Bulwer & others, but it was in the days of hot youth when I was scarcely older than you are now.

"I'm very glad you are in the country and like it. My grandfather had a little estate at Hadley wh ought to be mine (only to be sure he had the right to leave it to whom he liked)—and he lies buried there. I often meditate a trip into that country to look at my father's birthplace. I was very glad to hear from the Crowes that you were living and once more friendly with your family; they are the best friends for a man though not the pleasantest always. And I envy a man who has freshness enough in him left to be meditating heroic satires and reading Catullus in green lanes. I fancy sometimes I could do these things, but I'm afraid it's too late now. The London literary street-walkers must come back to the flags. They are taken home and lead virtuous lives for a little—but they come back to the lamps and the gin-palace again. If you have a fair opening in a profession for God's sake take it and don't depend on our's. I expect myself to be done in 3 or 4 years, and then what is to happen?

"This letter is not very lively: but I have just finished my number\* & am fagged and unwell, having 20 letters to write, and not wishing to delay further thanking you for yours. I am very much pleased indeed to have your good opinion, and that you like and appreciate what I do. I wonder whether I shall ever set up a flag as I often thought of doing

\* "King Dobbs," which came out in numbers and was dedicated to Thackeray, as was afterwards "Sketches in Ultramarine," in which "The King" was republished.

—if so, and you were inclined to serve I have always thought  
I would like to have you for a lieutenant. Believe me to be  
“Ever faithfully yours

“W. M. THACKERAY.

“I haven’t thanked you for the dedication wh was the  
purpose of the note, but the P. S. always contains the cream  
of the correspondence. Thank you then very much.”

There are touches in this friendly note, in the matter as well as the style, as unmistakably Thackerayean as the downright vertical lines of the handwriting. The Crowes were the family of Eyre Evans Crowe, journalist and historian, one of whose sons, afterwards Sir Joseph Archer Crowe, is a well-known authority on the history of Flemish and Italian artists, and another, Mr. Eyre Crowe, A.R.A., was Thackeray’s secretary on his first visit to America.



My own acquaintance with Hannay was a chance one. Going home one night from the opera,—such opera as, in regard to vocalism, exists no longer upon earth,—with echoes from the voices of Mario and Grisi ringing in my head, as they are still too apt to do, I stopped at a little chocolate house in Oxford Street, kept by an Italian who had been a pastry-cook in the kitchen of Louis Philippe. A fugitive, like his royal master, in 1848, he had betaken himself to London and there dispensed excellent chocolate, stirring it with rapid revolutions of a long stick, and serving it with reminiscences of his former exalted state. On this occasion I found two persons sitting at a table in the little back room. One was a short, apparently middle-aged man, with a flat nose and withered, beardless face, whose impressive ugliness seemed somehow familiar to me. The other much taller man, in strong contrast with him, had a very youthful, blooming appearance, with rather handsome features wearing a strikingly intelligent expression. The older man pushed a newspaper towards me, with the evident design of provoking conversation; and accordingly we were soon engaged in an animated talk, which ran chiefly on literary subjects. When I was leaving it was proposed that we should exchange cards. I found that the older man was Henry Clapp, whom I then remembered to have heard years before holding forth at anti-slavery meetings in Boston. His companion was James Hannay.

In a short time Hannay and I had fallen into the habit of calling at each other’s lodgings, taking walks together, and seeing each other almost daily. He had an exuberance of life and a kind of winning comradeship that were irresistible. His conversation was varied and delightful; he had great quickness, wit, and power of repartee, together

\* I. e., of “Pendennis,” then in course of publication.

with a warm responsiveness, and that readiness to weigh anchor and sail wherever the thought may lead or new topics beckon which makes conversation a real stimulus and delight. He was literary through and through, though he had also had more active interests and experiences. He had entered the navy as a midshipman in 1840, and after several years of service had been dismissed with two or three brother officers for some youthful insubordination. The sentence was afterwards quashed on the ground of a technical informality—perhaps, also, on account of a suspicion that its severity was owing to a vindictive feeling, Hannay having circulated in manuscript some numbers of a paper containing satirical hits at his superiors. He was not, however, reappointed to a ship, and was now devoting himself to literature. He showed me some proof-sheets of his novel, "Singleton Fontenoy," which was then going through the press; and he had just published a pamphlet in reply to an attack on Carlyle in *Blackwood's Magazine*, known or supposed to have been written by the historian Alison. He showed me with great glee a commendatory notice of it in the *Athenæum*, as also a note from Carlyle, of which the following passage has stuck in my memory: "If this be Sheriff Alison of European history reputation, I know him of old for a pig of unadulterated lead."

Of Carlyle, Hannay had at that time seen much more than I had. A strange misconception of their relations seems, however, to have existed in some quarters, to judge from the following ridiculous story told by Mr. Augustus Hare, on the authority of Mrs. Duncan Stewart: "Mr. Hannay knew Carlyle very well, and often went to see him, but it was in his poorer days. One day when Mr. Hannay went to the house he saw two gold sovereigns lying exposed in a little vase on the chimney-piece. He asked Carlyle what they were for. Carlyle looked—for him—embarrassed, but gave no definite answer. 'Well, now, my dear fellow,' said Mr. Hannay, 'neither you nor I are quite in a position to play ducks and drakes with sovereigns; what are these for?' 'Well,' said Carlyle, 'the fact is Leigh Hunt likes better to find them there than that I should give them to him.'" (Hare, "Story of My Life," IV., 50.)

Apart from the absurdity of attributing this display of familiarity and impertinence to a man who was Carlyle's junior by thirty-three years, and who regarded him with the reverence of a humble disciple, this version of a well-known incident is a gross anachronism. It was while Hunt was living next door to Carlyle in Cheyne Row that his embarrassments, as his son tells us, were at "their worst." But he removed from that neighborhood in 1840, and before 1849, when Hannay first knew Carlyle, was in comparatively flourishing circumstances, being in receipt of a government pension of two hundred pounds procured for him partly through Carlyle's efforts, and of another of one



hundred and twenty pounds, from Sir Percy Shelley, while Dickens had raised nine hundred pounds for him by two amateur performances given for his benefit. Hannay had heard the story of "Leigh Hunt's sovereigns," as Carlyle called them. He told it to me, as he did, doubtless, to others, and it was no unnatural mistake of Mrs. Stewart or someone else who heard it as related by him to believe that he had had a part in it; it is not uncharitable to suppose that the details with which it is garnished in Mr. Hare's account were due to that writer's remarkable gift for embellishment. Hannay was as far as I was from being on a footing of over-familiarity in Cheyne Row. I remember our comparing impressions, and agreeing that the Scotch maid who opened the door had such an aspect of austere rectitude that one felt almost awestruck, as if before the guardian of some sacred portal. It has amused me since to find Mrs. Carlyle writing at that period of her "household worry" through lack of a competent servant, and of "that dreadful Elizabeth," who "murdered sleep," and who shortly after retired, or was dismissed, with the result, for the time at least, of an entirely chaotic state of things.

My acquaintance with Hannay and Clapp gave me a glimpse of the London literary Bohemia of that day which I should not otherwise have had. One characteristic of its members was the frequency with which they changed their lodgings, usually, it is to be surmised, in compliance with the request of their landladies. Clapp's great chum was William North, a man of eccentric vision, physical and mental, whose father was a barrister and Q. C. in good practice. North had been educated, partly at the University of Bonn, with a view to the same profession, and his father had taken chambers for him in one of the Inns of Court; but being bent on the pursuit of literature he refused to occupy them, and having, consequently, no allowance from the paternal purse, he was without resource except from small literary "jobs." One evening Hannay and I, going into an eating-house in the Strand to dine, found North and Clapp sitting at one of the tables, the former engaged in writing as rapidly as possible and the latter waiting to take the manuscript to the publisher, or editor, to procure the means of paying for the dinner they had ordered. Others of the fraternity were in more flourishing circumstances. The Brough brothers, of whom I met only Robert, were already beginning their career as writers of popular burlesques; while two sons of Laman Blanchard, with whom we occasionally passed a Saturday evening, or rather the greater part of the night, had regular situations on daily newspapers. Brough was the only man among them with a taste for music, and he and I had a warm dispute over some oysters on the relative merits of Grisi and Viardot-Garcia, while Hannay listened with bewilderment to this controversey about the difference (to him) "twixt tweedledum and tweedledee." The best-educated man among them was one whose name I have forgotten,

remembering only that I spent an evening at his chambers in one of the Inns of Court, in company with Hannay, and that, after placing a pot of coffee before one of us and a bottle of whiskey before the other, he petrified us both with an eloquent discourse on the philosophy of Hobbes.

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This set had a certain connection with the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Some of them once took me to Rossetti's studio, to which, however, he did not admit us, having, as he explained, a model sitting to him. But he came out into the corridor and talked to us for a while. Rossetti was then twenty-two, and his fine Italian face, with its rich brunette complexion, its delicate oval contour, and its bright and genial expression, seemed to me singularly attractive and indicative of artistic genius. "*Quantum mutatus ab illo*" was my reflection when I saw, a few years ago, the portrait prefixed to Mr. Hall Caine's "*Recollections*," in which the puffed cheeks and dull eyes show the effects of the moody and unhealthy existence which Mr. Caine had devotedly striven to alleviate, and which he has, perhaps, too circumstantially depicted.

In striking contrast with Rossetti's appearance was that of Woolner, whom I met one evening at North's. Two or three years older and much taller and more robust, with a noble face expressive of energy and high purpose, he might have served as a model of much that is best in the Anglo-Saxon character. His downright manner of speech and his intense contempt for snobbery were evinced in a comment, which I may not venture to repeat, on some recent exhibition of that vice supposed to be peculiar to English society. The talk happening to turn on the relative claims of painting and sculpture, I quoted four epigrammatic lines from Emerson's volume of poems published in 1847, of which, by the way, I had corrected the final proofs, supplying in particular, not without many misgivings, the lapses of punctuation—a matter which the author, professing his own ignorance, had left to the discretion of the printers. Woolner was, naturally, much struck, and perhaps artistically a little flattered, by the lines, which he asked me to repeat, in order that he might fix them in his memory. They are probably not too familiar for repetition here:

"The sinful painter drapes his goddess warm,  
Because she still is naked being drest;  
The godlike sculptor will not so deform  
Beauty which limbs and flesh enough invest."

Neither Woolner nor Rossetti, it need hardly be said, had at that time attracted any notice from the public. Their hopes of high achievement were fanned by the general enthusiasm of the Brotherhood, whose endeavors aimed at nothing less than a revolution in art that should

dethrone Raphael, restore the reign of his predecessors, and exalt their own names as the true successors of Botticelli and other princes of an elder line. Now and then a sound of cheer came privately from some outside voice. Woolner, when I met him, had just returned from a visit to Tennyson, which caused a little buzz of excitement in the circle, as presaging ampler recognition. But Tennyson's own productions were still caviare to that general public which was afterwards to invest him with a greater popularity than any other English poet, unless Byron be excepted, has ever enjoyed. Still less was it foreseen that Rossetti was destined to win fame as a poet not inferior to that which he was to achieve as a painter, and perhaps more legitimate and enduring. Two of his poems, "My Sister's Sleep" and "The Blessed Damozel," had been published earlier in this same year in that short-lived periodical by which the Brotherhood had sought to enlist the sympathy of discerning critics. It was entitled *The Germ*, and its contributors—by way, perhaps, of emphasizing its ill fate—pronounced the *G* hard. Neither the public nor the critics pronounced it in any fashion: they simply ignored it; even germs with a small *g* had not then begun to saturate literature. The four numbers being in no great request, a copy of them was generously presented to me. I valued them not only as a souvenir, but for their intrinsic merits, and intended to treasure them. But, alas! in one of those catastrophes of which three are said to be as destructive as a fire, they vanished—"lost, stolen, or strayed"—and were never recovered. I am told that collectors prize them now as worth their weight in gold; but gold is base metal in exchange for such jewels.

Besides the poems by Rossetti, one by Woolner—"My Beautiful Lady," afterwards expanded and published as a volume, made its first appearance in *The Germ*. Some other members of the group had, if I remember rightly, displayed a literary gift; and, by a curious coincidence, a poet-painter from America, T. Buchanan Read, was warmly welcomed as a kindred spirit during his stay in London in 1850. It was not till after his departure for Italy that I heard of him, and then it was with a chorus of praise for his charming social qualities. Before leaving he was entertained at a banquet presided over by the gods,—the gods of Greece, that is to say, in whose honor libations were poured, with the accompaniment of other pagan rites.

There was, I think, a disposition among these ardent young revolutionists to hope for aid from America in overthrowing conventionalities in literature, if not in art. I was surprised to find Rossetti—a man of few books—familiar with Judd's "Margaret," and eager for information about the author, whom he pronounced, in the slang of the set, "a godlike stunner." His admiration for Poe—the poet, not the story-writer—was carried to the verge of idolatry, and was largely shared by

some of his associates, especially by Hannay, who was wont to interrupt a convivial celebration by shouting out

"The glory that was Greece, and the grandeur that was Rome"

in tones less suited to the dulcet strains of the poem in which the line occurs—"To Helen"—than to the prevailing din of conversation and jingling glasses. One day, when we were lounging beside a book-stall, Hannay espied a copy of the "Poems," and turning to me, exclaimed, "For God's sake, don't let Poe stand here waiting for a sixpence!" Being for the moment the less impecunious of the two, I responded to the appeal, and the thin little volume in blue cloth, bearing the imprint of Putnam, still holds its place on my shelves with other waifs of not much higher cost.



One of our strolls was to Highgate, where Hannay wished me to see the house where Coleridge had spent the last years of his life,—and also to taste the shandy-gaff for which a public-house in the neighborhood was famous. Though familiar with Coleridge's writings, I had ceased to regard them as possible elucidations of the great mysteries, and Carlyle's "Life of Sterling," which would certainly have piqued curiosity in regard to the environment, did not appear till the following year. Hence my memory of the day is very vague; even the vaunted beverage left no enduring impression; all that I can recall is the general aspect of the scene and the sound of my companion's voice, which flowed on almost as continuously, and much more intelligibly, than that of him who in this same classic neighborhood had discoursed so eloquently and mysteriously on "the reason" and "the understanding," and on "om-m-mject" and "sum-m-mject."

I am inclined to think that Hannay's true gift lay not in literature, but in oratory. This was, indeed, his own opinion. He had dreams of one day getting into Parliament, and by way of exercising himself in public speaking was in the habit of attending a debating-club, to which I accompanied him one night. Like the club from which the indignant Colonel Newcome carried off Clive, it held its meetings in a public-house. But the proceedings, though not unconvivial, were entirely decorous. At two tables, which ran parallel from one end of the long room to the other, sat fifty or more respectably dressed men, each with a glass before him which a waiter from time to time replenished. At the upper end was a slightly elevated platform, occupied by the chairman and other officers. The subject—then, as now, admirably fitted to provoke a strenuous discussion—was the unjustifiableness of war. The advocates of peace, having moved the resolution, assumed the offensive, with a belligerent spirit, which, as the discussion grew warm,

displayed itself in attacks partaking in some degree of personal animosity. Hannay, who led the opposition and was greeted with the applause that betokened his standing as a general favorite, made two speeches, and carried the meeting with him, if not by the force of his arguments, by a stream of wit and paradox poured forth with a beaming good-humor and gay insouciance altogether captivating. Only one passage remains in my memory—a plea for war on the ground of the brilliant themes which it had given to literature; if, for example, the Romans had not made war upon Egypt, the world would be immeasurably the poorer through the want of Shakespeare's "Antony and Cleopatra."



Having heard, in the previous summer, some night-long debates in Parliament, I could well believe that Hannay might make his mark in that body, where telling hits and genial banter were, and perhaps still are, eagerly welcomed as a relief to the weightier reasoning of the leaders, as well as to the prosing of ordinary members. A few years later, in 1857, Hannay contested the representation of a Scotch borough, but was defeated by Mr. Ewart, who had held the seat for many years. My impression of my friend's oratorical powers is more than confirmed by the writer of an obituary notice in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, who had no doubt had much more frequent opportunities of judging them than I. After describing him as "one of the most brilliant talkers of his time," he goes on: "In a set speech he was almost equally happy. There is no man in the House of Commons with anything like his facility of speech,—nothing of the same kind, nothing which indicates a similar genius." This was written in 1873, and I cannot but suspect that there is in it some exaggeration. At all events, it does not characterize Hannay's style as recalled by me, which was, indeed, singularly fluent and engaging, but which resembled that, not of the great masters of oratory, but of the light cavalry of debaters, such as Bernal Osborne, whose speeches once delighted the House by their wit and raillery, or, to come down to the present day, of Mr. Arthur Balfour in his lightest and least responsible vein.

A less rare but sufficiently remarkable gift which Hannay possessed was an extremely retentive memory. Of this I will give two instances. North had published a translation of Lamartine's minor poems, and I asked him one evening—not having seen the book—how he had rendered the exquisite stanza in "Le Lac" beginning,—

"Un jour—t'en souvient-il?—nous voguions en silence."

He was unable to recollect, but called out, "Hannay, how did I translate that?" Whereupon Hannay, who had read the proof-sheets of the

book a year or two before, immediately repeated the lines. It was an insipid version, but not worse, as I afterwards found, than all or most of the others in the little volume, which, however, had elicited an enthusiastic acknowledgment from Lamartine.\* On another occasion while sitting in Hannay's room, waiting for him to get ready for a stroll, I picked up from the table a copy of the "Annales" of Tacitus, and began to read aloud the first sentence that caught my eye, but was interrupted by Hannay, who took the words out of my mouth and went through the whole paragraph. Then I turned over the pages and tested him by beginning one passage after another, always with the same result. This would not have seemed so remarkable if the work had been the "Æneid" or the "Odes of Horace," and if Hannay had been educated at an English public school and university. But he had had no such advantages. His son says, in the account of him in the "Dictionary of National Biography," that he had studied Latin with a priest in Malta, and this may have been so; but his knowledge of the language was originally acquired, as he himself told me, at a school in Scotland, "where," he added, "all boys are taught it;" and his pronunciation, while it differed slightly from the English, was not that of the Italian Latinists. At that time he knew no Greek; but he afterwards, as his son tells us, taught himself to read it—incited partly, I flatter myself, by some remarks of mine, when he had shown a naïve astonishment at finding me one day reading a Greek book.



I never saw Hannay after that year, and our correspondence soon dropped, from lack of material—on my side at least, from which there was nothing to communicate that had any liveliness of incident. But I heard of him at long intervals—from Thackeray in 1852 and again

\* Lamartine's letter, which I heard of but do not remember to have seen, was addressed to "Sir William North." So Mr. Sutherland Edwards tells us in his "Personal Recollections," adding that North, highly delighted, hurried to his friend Woolner, and exhibiting the letter exclaimed, "Look here, Woolner, Lamartine has knighted me! From the Queen of England I could not, as a republican, receive such a distinction; but from the future President of the French Republic it is an honor which I feel bound to accept." "Then," Mr. Edwards goes on, "nothing would satisfy 'Sir William' but to go to Paris in order to pay his respects in person to Lamartine, who received him very graciously. The great man sent him, moreover, an invitation for his reception days, but he was so much occupied on these occasions by other people that North considered himself neglected, slighted, and at last took offence. 'This is no true republic,' he said to himself; and he therefore resolved to cross the Atlantic." This resolution was carried into effect some years later, with the result that North, after struggling in vain to gain a secure position in journalism, put an end to his life. The faithful Clapp commemorated his talents and virtues in a eulogistic article.

in 1855, and from Carlyle in 1863. The former spoke very warmly of him, telling me on the first occasion that he had wished to bring him with him to America, and regretting the cause, well known to me, that made it impossible. On the second occasion he told me of Hannay's marriage, speaking in high terms of his wife, an intimate friend of Rossetti and the model of one or more of his pictures of Beatrice.

Carlyle, to my surprise and dismay, exploded with wrath at the mention of Hannay's name, and denounced him as "a poor creature." The cause of this irritation was that Hannay had asked him to take part in some demonstration of respect for an Irish patriot and ex-rebel; I thought he said Meagher, but this cannot have been the case, unless the proposal was merely that of expressing a favorable opinion in a letter intended for publication after Meagher's escape from Australia to the United States, when the question was agitated whether he had broken his parole. I wondered at first why Hannay, who professed to be a Conservative, should have entertained the idea of any such proceeding; but reflection suggested that his Toryism, being merely founded on a romantic sentiment, might not have been adverse to a chivalrous impulse in defence of an enemy of the government.

During these years he had acquired considerable reputation as a writer, chiefly by critical and historical articles contributed to leading periodicals, including several essays in the *Quarterly Review* which were republished by Murray in book form in 1861. Another volume, a reprint of shorter papers, appeared in 1865, under the title of "Characters and Criticisms." The writer I have before quoted says: "As a critic he was singularly acute, and his style was bright, playful, and epigrammatic, as his speech was. Criticism, indeed, was his strongest role, and if his powers of production had been permitted full play, we venture to think that he would have distanced every Englishman of his time, and have gained for himself the reputation enjoyed by one or two Frenchmen of similar character." But this is the language of a bereaved editor, and, like obituaries in general, cannot be accepted as an impartial judgment. Hannay had neither the breadth of knowledge, the subtlety of insight, nor the distinction of style of a Sainte-Beuve or a Taine.

From 1860 to 1864 he edited the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, and signalized his conduct of the paper by his caustic and malicious criticising of the scholarship of some of the Scotch professors—of Principal Tulloch in particular, who, according to his biographer, Mrs. Oliphant, suffered terribly, not only in mind but in body, under these attacks. The four succeeding years were passed in London; and during the next four, the last of his life, he held the post of British Consul at Barcelona. In the morning of the 9th of January, 1873, having been apparently in perfect health on the preceding day and corrected the

proof-sheets of an article in the evening, he was found sitting in an armchair—dead. He had not quite completed his forty-sixth year.

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His publications had not been many, nor can they be considered important. He had not fulfilled the promise of his early years. The writer in the *Pall Mall Gazette* assigns as the reason that "he was unconquerably indolent. Idleness, in all but reading and rumination, was an inborn vice, which nothing moved or moved to much effect. He had the faults of a temperament common among literary men of the last century, just as his literary character was more like to theirs than to that of their successors in our own days."

I have not attempted in this paper to give any adequate account of Hannay's career. He has been the subject of several articles, and Mr. J. Cordy Jeaffreson, in his memoirs, and Mr. Espinasse, in his "Literary Recollections," have written of him at length. Nor was it of his literary merits or demerits that I set out to speak. There have been as clever or cleverer writers in abundance, even among those of no stronger calibre. But I at least have never known one whose companionship was so attractive through his inextinguishable vivacity, his constant play of humor, his piquant observations, and his frank good-fellowship. Spontaneity and simplicity, a total exemption from affectation or any attempt at display, gave the crowning charm to his conversation. As I close, the picture of one night comes back to me with special distinctness. There were half a dozen of us, or less, assembled in a small room, round a table on which coffee and some more potent beverages were steaming, while occasionally a pipe or cigar was lighted, but only by two or three of the company, smoking, even among literary youngsters, being less common then than now. Hannay was in full swing, and the rest of us were content to interpose occasional objections that served only as stimulants. Suddenly, about midnight, his head dropped, and for an hour or more he lay on the sofa in a profound and easy sleep. Then, as suddenly, he woke, and, fresh as a lark, his face beaming, his tongue as fluent, his utterance as clear as ever, started off anew, apparently unconscious of his long interval of silence.

Will it seem strange that after so many years I can recall scarcely anything that was said at such a symposium, and very little of the subjects, except that they were subjects, and not a word was spoken unfit to be heard in any society? If these men, or some of them, were regarded as "Bohemians," their style, it must be confessed, was not that of the "Quartier Latin."



# HER SPIRIT HUSBAND

*By Dorothy Richardson*



## I.

**K**ATE KAMP, free-lance journalist, lighted the wick under her alcohol teakettle, and again read over the alluring "Personal:"

"**W**ANTED—Refined, Well-Educated Young Lady, to fill position of trust and responsibility. Must have auburn hair, good figure, pretty, fond of music and cards. **MUST NOT** be superstitious. Only young women of the most irreproachable morality need apply. Best of references given and required. Light duties and liberal remuneration to right party. Answer in own handwriting, giving description of personal appearance, age, accomplishments, etc., etc.

"Lock Box 333, New York City."

"Well, now, Keno Kamp, will you tell me what you think of that?" the girl exclaimed, proceeding to fill her teakettle from the toilet-pitcher on the washstand. "What do you suppose he wants, anyhow?"

Keno did not answer. He rarely ever paid the slightest attention to Kate's deferential questions, unless, perchance, to utter a meaningless oath, but on this particular morning, having just breakfasted, and being, accordingly, in excellent humor, he did not deign so much as a word. Keno was Kate's "husband," "the best and only kind of a husband to have," she was often quoted as saying, together with a long list of humorous, not to say sarcastic, reasons. Keno was a parrot.

As for Kate, she was a bachelor girl, doing light housekeeping. Extremely light housekeeping it was—of the bedroom variety: the kind one reads about in magazine stories, which sounds cosier in print than it is in real life.

"One thing certain, Keno Kamp, we've got to scare up a story somewhere. Funds are getting low, Keno, and this 'Personal' does sound interesting. It's positively enticing." She picked up the newspaper again.

"Only red-headed girls need apply. H—m! What's the matter with my applying for the job myself," stroking her long, copper-tinted braids. "And must not be superstitious! Ah, Keno!"

She ate her rolls and drank her tea in profound meditation, not even once speaking to the bird. It was as she said. Work had not

been so plentiful with Kate as it ought to have been. Special features for the Sunday papers were growing scarce. It was her third year in metropolitan journalism, and, as she now began to realize, her fund of ideas, once so abundant, was now practically exhausted.

"I'm tired of this free-lancing, anyway, aren't you, Keno?" she finally said, draining her Dresden cup and jumping up briskly. "It's feast to-day and famine to-morrow, or, to be strictly literal, Keno, the famine is right on now."

Thus the girl kept up a constant monologue, the while she washed her breakfast things. The big, blue-flowered bowl on the washstand served the double purpose of dishpan and face-basin. Kate did not have the time nor the conveniences to be fastidious about non-essentials like that. Besides, the exigencies incident to two years of more or less precarious domestic arrangements had served to overcome culinary prejudices generally. Her original New England housewife's conscience was dead, and so, having despatched the breakfast dishes, she emptied the dishwasher, rinsed the bowl, refilled it with clear, cold water, dashed with cologne, and then proceeded to wash her pretty face—without a qualm. After which she sat down and wrote on her best monogrammed stationery:

"DEAR SIR: Noticing your 'Personal' in this morning's paper, I desire herewith to apply for the position which you have to offer. If you will grant me a personal interview, I am quite confident we can come to terms. Am twenty-five years old. Am very fond of music and cards, and play the piano quite well. I am not at all superstitious. Indeed, I am absolutely afraid of nothing, and if I should ever meet a ghost I shall endeavor to cultivate his acquaintance. Am five feet four and a half inches tall, weigh one hundred and twenty pounds, and have a slender, well-rounded figure. My complexion is clear white and red, and my eyes are a deep brown. As to hair, I have an abundance of the kind you particularly specify, lock of same enclosed herewith. For references please apply to Mr. Andrew Rockefeller and Mr. John D. Carnegie. If you consider my application favorably, please submit the names of your references and name an hour and place where I can have a personal interview.

"Awaiting your early reply, I am

"Very truly yours,

"VIOLETTE TRAVIS."

"Now, don't you think that ought to fetch him, Keno?" she inquired after reading the letter aloud. "It takes a Violette sort of a name to attract such gentlemen as Lock Box 333, and it would never do to give our real name to such gentlemen, Keno—never, never. Our reputation would be ruined."

She sealed the note, not forgetting the promised lock of hair, ad-

dressed the envelope, and then tore the whole thing into bits. "No, Keno, it might, after all, be a bona-fide advertisement, and something good may come of it,—a story, perhaps. So we'll write a nice, lady-like note and sign our own name. How does this strike you, Keno?" reading aloud:

"LOCK BOX 333: If the lady or gentleman who inserted the enclosed 'Personal' in this morning's paper will address Miss Kate Kamp, 135 East Steenth Street, New York City, he or she will no doubt be able to make a satisfactory arrangement. Miss Kamp believes herself to be possessed of all the qualifications mentioned therein, and can furnish the best of references as to character and ability. Miss Kamp awaits an early reply."

Which note Kate sealed, addressed, and stamped. Then she walked over and surveyed herself in the mirror. "Every qualification, haven't I, Keno? I can't help knowing that, can I?"

She proceeded to finish her toilet. She brushed her copper-colored hair and piled it high on her shapely head. She powdered her tip-tilted nose, and jumped into a smart black tailor gown. For no difference how limited her resources, Kate always managed to be one smart street costume ahead. It was a part of her stock in trade, as much so as her lead-pencils or her typewriter.

## II.

TEN o'clock in the morning, two days later, found Kate Kamp stepping off the elevator on the fifth floor of a fashionable apartment-house in that locality which can here be only vaguely referred to as the "West Seventies." Pushing the electric button at the door of "Suite 17," a maid appeared and ushered the caller into a handsomely furnished drawing-room, there to await the appearance of that mysterious personage known as yet by no other name than Lock Box 333. The reply to Kate's note had given no clue to either the identity or the sex of the advertiser. The mystery was cleared in a moment, however, by the approaching frou-frou of silken skirts sweeping down the long, dark hallway. The beaded draperies parted, and a tall, elegantly dressed woman advanced.

"Miss Kamp, I believe," said the lady in a voice of sepulchral quality, motioning her visitor to a pink brocade divan. She was, indeed, more the apparition of a woman than a reality, Kate thought, as the tall, slender figure of her hostess sank, with a svelte movement, into the chair opposite. Very, very tall, and very, very thin,—emaciated, she was,—and dressed in deep, rich mourning. Looking out from a delicate-featured face of exceeding pallor, two great, deep-set black eyes burned eagerly. It was a face cataloguable in literature as spirituelle. Miss

Kamp's mental observation summed it up, however, in the word peaked, with accent on the last syllable. The nose and the ears were so thin as to be marvellously translucent to the shaft of October sunlight that streamed in from the south window. It was plain, even to the most casual observer, that it was the face of a woman who was being gradually consumed by a slow-burning, inward fire, a conflagration of the very soul itself. A wealth of prematurely gray hair made the lady's age uncertain. It might have been set down anywhere from thirty to forty. She was in reality forty-two.

The woman looked into her visitor's eyes searchingly, as if to read any signs of deception that might have been there; then she began, in a voice singularly low and solemn:

"Miss Kamp, I shall be very frank with you and explain, in so far as it is possible for me to explain such a delicate matter, the strange advertisement which is responsible for our meeting to-day. Miss Kamp, I am not flattering you when I say that I am much pleased with your appearance. I have looked into your eyes, I have looked almost into your soul, and I cannot believe that my intuitions are very far wrong. I believe you are a woman to be trusted, and whether you do or do not accept the position which I shall offer you, I feel I can rely upon your honor not to reveal the substance of this interview. For, as you will readily understand, if the newspapers should ever get hold of this they would make a most unpleasant sensation out of it, and if there is one thing I abhor, it is any sort of newspaper notoriety."

Kate winced. The lady coughed delicately. "Indeed, it was on account of the fear of any possible publicity that I did not use my name in replying to your note. I believe I can now safely divulge it. You probably have heard of me before. I am Mrs. Townsend, Mrs. Felicia Townsend."

Who, indeed, had not heard that name?—the name of the rich widow of Stephen Townsend, the "posthumous millionaire," as he was now often spoken of by those who remembered the disappearance of the eccentric clubman, his subsequent death in the Far East, and eventually the realization by Mrs. Townsend of an immense fortune out of "Old Reliable" mining stock, stock which in her husband's lifetime had not been accounted worth the paper it was written on.

"You are no doubt surprised, Miss Kamp, to find me here, but these are the apartments in which Mr. Townsend and I began house-keeping shortly after we were married." Mrs. Townsend looked about the room sadly, reminiscently.

"Yes," replied the girl, "for I always thought you lived at the Waldorf."

"So I do, my dear," the widow answered. "I have lived there, such time as I stay in New York, for five years; and now we are ap-

proaching the subject at issue, and in which you are doubtless as much interested as I am."

The widow looked uneasily about the beautiful drawing-room. Her dark eyes wandered from floor to ceiling and all over the richly ornamented walls, resting at last upon the portrait of a handsome man hanging directly above the shiny grand piano.

"You remember the qualifications?" she asked suddenly. "Of course you do. I see for myself that you are just the woman I am looking for so far as personality is concerned. And your hair is beautiful, just the kind my poor, dear husband was so crazy about." The lady sighed.

"You are fond of music and cards?"

"Oh, yes, indeed," answered the applicant.

"And you perhaps play a little yourself on the piano?"

"Yes, quite a little, Mrs. Townsend."

"And are not at all superstitious?"

"Not in the least."

"You would not be afraid to stay alone in a house which was said to be haunted?"

"No, indeed, I should rather enjoy it."

"But if you should see things, or hear things, what then? Are you sure you wouldn't become frightened?" whispered the woman eagerly.

"No, Mrs. Townsend, it wouldn't affect me in the least."

With eyes now burning like two live coals, and a faint color mounting into her thin cheeks, the catechiser put forth an icy-cold hand and laid it upon Kate's warm, plump one. "If you mean that, my dear," she whispered, "if you mean that, I will give you two hundred dollars a month if you will take the position. Will you take it?"

"Well, that depends upon what you want me to do. You have not told me that yet," the girl answered.

"No, I have not," said Mrs. Townsend slowly, "but I will now speak plainly. I want a housekeeper for these apartments. I want just such a young lady as yourself, one who will make a comfortable home, and be a cheerful, pleasant companion for—for—for my husband."

"Your husband!" the girl almost screamed.

"But you said you were not superstitious." There was a deep note of disappointment, almost anguish, in the Widow's voice.

"Nor am I superstitious. But I'm surprised, for I thought your husband was dead."

The woman bowed her head, and locked the thin fingers of the delicate hands lying in her lap.

"Ah, I see," the girl murmured gently. "Pardon me, Mrs. Townsend. I understand now. I remember the accounts in the newspapers

very well. It was never definitely proved that he was dead, if I remember aright." Mrs. Townsend was still silent, her head bowed low on her heaving breast.

"You need not hesitate to tell me anything, Mrs. Townsend. I am not afraid. Your secret is safe with me," Kate ventured. "Is—is Mr. Townsend insane?"

Mrs. Townsend raised her head quickly, almost resentfully, at the word insane, only to lapse into her habitual sadness. "No, Miss Kamp," she replied at last, "my husband is dead. He is dead, but his spirit,"—she choked with sobs,—“his spirit still roams on earth.”

"Oh!" exclaimed the girl.

"And he refuses to give up this house, and so, you see, it is my duty to make him as comfortable as possible."

"Of course," purred Kate mechanically, as if it were quite a common impulse to wish to make dead husbands comfortable.

"Yes," continued his widow, evidently relieved now that the uncanny confession had been made at last,—“yes, Miss Kamp, I feel as though I must spare no expense to give Mr. Townsend's spiritual body every material comfort. He has the best wines and liquors and cigars that money can buy, all his favorite old brands, and I am just as particular about his steaks and chops as I formerly was, more so, in fact, than when he was in the flesh.”

Kate listened with wide-open eyes.

"It is a great sorrow to me, however," she went on, "that Mr. Townsend insists upon retaining these cramped quarters. Of course, they did well enough for us then, but they are not adapted to my social needs now. Mr. Townsend is very fond of the place, however, and refuses to leave it. I have suggested his moving to the hotel, but he will not hear of it. He hates hotel life and always did abhor society." Mrs. Townsend's manner grew more confident, her face assumed a more cheerful expression, as she noted the intelligence and sympathy with which the girl listened to her disclosures.

"Yes, my dear Miss Kamp, it is not only a pleasure for me to give Mr. Townsend's astral body every comfort which his carnal body formerly demanded, but it is a duty. My dear husband left me a very rich widow, as you no doubt know."

Kate bowed.

"And, furthermore, Miss Kamp, we were not as happy as we might have been during our short married life. Mr. Townsend's tastes and mine were not at all congenial, and we had many unpleasant episodes. As I look back now I can see that I was quite as much to blame as my dear husband was, and this fact alone makes my obligations to his spirit still deeper and more urgent. I feel like making up for my former shortcomings as a wife and homemaker. I was young and did not

understand him, and I did get terribly exasperated with his irregular habits. And now, Miss Kamp," she continued, "I have a request to make of you. I do not want you to ask any questions. I have told you all it is necessary for you to know about my affairs and my relationship with the spirit of my deceased husband. One of the stipulations I shall make in offering you the position is that you solemnly pledge yourself to the utmost secrecy regarding all that I have told you. You will also promise faithfully not to try to unravel anything which may appear mysterious to you, or to investigate any spiritual phenomena which may occur in these apartments. If you are truthful in saying that you are not superstitious, then you will not be afraid, and nothing can happen which will disturb you."

"I understand," murmured Miss Kamp.

"You will find very little, if anything, to do, except to make up the beds in the morning, as you will have no maid. As I told you, the place is small, only seven rooms and a bath, and so I think by having a charwoman come in twice a week to sweep and dust you ought to get along very nicely. I wouldn't mind your having a maid, or two of them, for that matter, only on Mr. Townsend's account——"

Her listener smiled faintly. "Oh, no; that is not the reason, my dear Miss Kamp, I assure you. It is because women servants always irritate my husband. He used to threaten to dispense with them entirely and employ only men—Chinese or Japanese. In fact, the servant-girl question always was a matter of dispute between us. I wouldn't have a Chinaman and he was continually finding fault with the maids. Whenever he mislaid any of his things, his collar-button or necktie, he blamed them for hiding it or stealing it, and usually made me discharge the girl before he discovered his mistake. That is why I don't wish you to have a servant at all. I take it that you wouldn't care about being shut up here alone with a Chinaman, and, of course, you naturally would wish to avoid any scene with my husband."

"Oh, my! I should say so," hastily declared Kate.

"Mr. Townsend will probably be home a great deal more now, however, than he was during his life with me," continued the Widow. "He is nearing his forty-third year now, and though he occasionally spends a night at his club, he is really becoming quite settled and enjoys nothing more than his dressing-gown and slippers, a good cigar, and a book. He is very fond of books. Just come and look at his library." She rolled back the sliding doors of rich, carved Flemish oak, which formed one entire end of the long drawing-room.

"How beautiful!" the girl cried in honest admiration, as they stepped into the rich, sombre-tinted, book-lined room. The big, round table, the high-backed, carved chairs, the cabinets, everything was of ebony. There was a Turkish rug on the black, polished floor, and the

ceiling was finished in a mosaic of black and red, with cross-beams of ebony. There was a beautiful tiled hearth and a great, open fireplace, where make-believe logs lay on andirons of old Venetian design. Mrs. Townsend touched a lighted match to the logs.

"You will remember, Miss Kamp, always to light this fire in the evening about five o'clock. Mr. Townsend likes to find it cheery when he gets home to dinner,—that is, when he comes home for dinner."

They passed out of the library into a long, dark hall, in the shadows of which Mrs. Townsend's tall, black-robed figure was lost as she led the way to the bedrooms.

"You will find the whole house very sunny and well ventilated, Miss Kamp," she said, as they stepped into a fairy chamber done in pale blue and white cretonne, with the bed dressed in pale blue silk under white net, which, it was explained, was the guest-chamber.

"And where shall I sleep?" she inquired, following Mrs. Townsend into the adjoining bedroom, a dainty marvel in yellow and white.

"Right there," answered that lady decisively, pointing to one of the twin beds of beautifully wrought brass which stood side by side under one canopy of cowslip yellow silk. "I think you will find this room more comfortable than the blue chamber," she went on, "at least Mr. Townsend and I always found it so."

"And that is my bed?" Kate touched the silken coverlet with her parasol handle.

"Yes, that one. I should just as lief you had the other. It would really make no difference, except that Mr. Townsend is such a crank about sleeping next the wall." Kate bit her lips to conceal a smile. Mrs. Townsend turned up a corner of the bedclothes, disclosing a glimpse of soft white blankets, and eider-down comforters, and snowy, hemstitched sheets.

"These hair mattresses are just new and so are the springs on both beds," explained the Widow. "Mr. Townsend complained about the springs on his bed sinking in the middle and that the old mattress was full of knots."

The dining-room came next for inspection. A big, sombre room it was, dark with Flemish oak and sparkling with the prismatic reflections from a sideboard loaded with cut-glass and silver. Suspended across pegs of natural wood were multitudinous guns and strange Indian war implements. Piled in the corners of the room were sheaves of fancifully wrought fishing-rods. A massive stuffed buffalo's head looked down mildly from above the mantelpiece, while on the opposite wall hung a duplicate of the face which Kate had noticed above the piano.

"And what provision is there for cooking, Mrs. Townsend?" she asked, thinking of her chafing-dish and alcohol teakettle.

"Oh, that is a very simple matter," returned the lady. "Your



meals will be served by the caterer from the restaurant down-stairs. There is no kitchen, as Mr. Townsend always preferred French cooking. I shall buy a little alcohol teakettle for you, though, so if you want a cup of tea between meals, you can always have it."

"Thank you, Mrs. Townsend, but I already have one, which I can bring along."

"You will take the position, then?" the other asked joyfully.

"Yes."

"Well, I am sure, Miss Kamp, you will find everything very comfortable and in perfect order, except the shower-bath," she said, pouring out a glass of wine, "but shower-baths, as possibly you already know, will get out of order even in the best regulated houses. And I wish to repeat my stipulations. I only ask you to be absolutely dumb in regard to all I have told you and to receive no visitors whatever without first consulting me. I have made all arrangements with the waiter who will serve your meals, with the charwoman, and the electrician. Only those three persons are allowed to cross the threshold. While I do not wish to restrict your liberties, I must ask, however, that you will not stay out long at a time, and that you will always be home to meals. Mr. Townsend always did have a horror of eating alone."

"Yes, I understand," said Kate.

"I'm so glad you do, Miss Kamp. Some women are so stupid. Mr. Townsend is this kind of a man: He may not be home to dinner once in two weeks, but he wants dinner prepared for him just the same, so if he does happen home there is no hitch. It's unreasonable, of course, but it's a man's way. For exercise you can walk in the Park every day. And when you are home you can do as you please in the library or amuse yourself at the piano. Mr. Townsend is very fond of music, so I wish you would entertain him in the evenings. The piano needs tuning, he says, so don't let me forget to have it done immediately."

In conclusion, and in consideration of two hundred dollars per month salary, Kate Kamp accepted the unique position of housekeeper to the spirit of the late Mr. Stephen Townsend, and that very night found her and Keno—she insisted upon Keno's being included in the bargain, much to the Widow's misgivings—comfortably installed among the Lares and Penates of that gentleman.

### III.

"WHAT a day of adventure, and still the mystery deepens," gasped Kate, sinking into the depth of the big, leather-covered chair, and addressing Keno, who was perched on a branch of the magnificent antlers that adorned the wall above her head.

It was the evening of the second day of their proprietorship. Dinner was momentarily expected. Mrs. Townsend had just departed,

after an afternoon spent in showing the new housekeeper the proper place of things. They had gone over the bed and table linen together, Mrs. Townsend taking notes of such pieces as needed replenishing. They had inspected the china-cabinet and counted the silver. A liberal quantity of cigars and liquors had been ordered the day before and was now stowed away under the sideboard. The piano-tuner had been there and gone, and the electrician, and the plumber to repair the shower-bath. They had also gone over the contents of the music cabinet, Mrs. Townsend placing in a separate pile the favorite selections of her late husband.

As Kate sat in the gathering twilight of the October day she turned over all the strange happenings of the several days previous. "But if Mr. Townsend's spirit demands a housekeeper, why does she have to be a red-headed woman and have a good figure?" she asked, again looking up at the bird. "Why wouldn't any neat, tidy housekeeper do just as well?"

This reverie was interrupted by the arrival of the waiter. "Well, Miss, how's it going by this time?" he asked while he arranged the dishes. The table was set for two. He ladled out the soup and carved the roast into two portions. Ignoring Mrs. Townsend's injunctions, she allowed him to grow loquacious. He was a young Irishman.

"Queer lady, that Mrs. Townsend," he went on, filling the numerous wine glasses grouped around the plate dedicated to Mr. Townsend's spirit. "Mighty pretty woman too, and a fine lady to wait on."

"You've known her for some time, then?" ventured the housekeeper, now sipping daintily at the hot consomme.

"Yes'm, I've been downstairs three years now, and I am the only waiter that ever serves meals up here."

"Indeed? I am not the first housekeeper, then?"

"No, Ma'm; you're about the twenty-first. They don't stay long. There was five tried it last month. Guess Mrs. Townsend is pretty much tickled at finding you."

"What was the matter with the others?" queried the girl.

Mullany cast a swift, searching glance towards Kate's sober, serious face, as if to determine how much it was safe to tell her. "Oh, nothing particular the matter with the girls, only they all got scared. None of them stayed more'n one night."

"Why was that?"

The waiter hesitated. "I don't know whether I ought to tell you or not. You don't think it'll make you afraid? You did not hear anything last night, did you?"

"No, of course not," she laughed, "and I'm not easily scared. You know all about the affair, I see."

"Yes, Miss, Mrs. Townsend had to tell a few people, and I'm one

of them, and as you seem to be a sensible young lady, I don't mind having you know that the reason the others left was because they said the spirit made such a disturbance at night as to throw them into fits. One of them, a Miss Cauldwell she was, came tearing out into the hall one night about two o'clock, and the janitor's wife had to let her stay with her until morning. She told the elevator man that the spirit had sworn a blue streak at her and that she plainly heard him kicking the furniture. She wouldn't even go inside the next morning to get her clothes until Mrs. Townsend came up from the hotel and got things fixed with the agent. The elevator man resigned and so did the janitor. They wouldn't stay in a building where there was a ghost, they said, and some of the tenants moved out too when they heard the story. The agent wanted Mrs. Townsend to give up the place, as it was making lots of talk, but the lady pleaded so hard and offered him double the regular rent, so he gave in."

"And did they ever find out what made the noises?" Kate asked, resuming the dinner, which had remained untouched during the waiter's story.

"Well, not exactly," he replied, helping Mr. Townsend's dessert-dish to the pudding, "unless it was the radiators. They do groan something awful sometimes, of nights, and the water-pipes make a fearful noise too sometimes. So don't get scared when you hear a rumpus."

"After all, though, it does give one a sort of queer feeling," she commented, after Mullany had departed with his empty dishes. She looked at the handsome face of her spirit host. It was a fine piece of pastel work, and showed a ruddy, bronze-tinted skin and merry, keen blue eyes. She felt a queer feeling of sympathy as she studied the clever countenance.

"Well, I'd be willing to bet a month's wages that you had troubles of your own with that fool wife of yours," she remarked aloud.

The remainder of the evening passed pleasantly. She wrote letters for a while in the library, before the glowing fireplace, as the evening was chilly. She rummaged among the beautifully bound books, and, true to her contract, wound up the evening with the playing of some of the late Mr. Townsend's favorite compositions.

"Well, this is a lark, isn't it? and a snap too?" she said while undressing. The waiter's story had been dismissed from her practical mind, and, happy over the good fortune that had so suddenly overtaken her, she tumbled into her allotted one of the twin beds, and was soon fast asleep.

Thus the days and the weeks passed happily. Undisturbed by any manifestations of the spirit of the late proprietor, Kate thoroughly enjoyed the quiet life of elegance which she led in this handsome apart-

ment. She walked in the Park every day, and twice a week spent the afternoon down-town, shopping or at the matinee, while Mrs. Townsend generously kept house during her absence. Meanwhile many strange things had occurred which might have disturbed a less philosophical mind than that of the housekeeper. Frequently, upon returning a little earlier than she was expected, Kate would hear the excited voice of Mrs. Townsend, as if in altercation with someone in the library, and when that lady emerged at last, after a stormy session, her face more than once showed traces of violent weeping. Once, only once, did the housekeeper succumb to the temptation of eavesdropping. She had just let herself in with the latch-key, and was startled to hear her own name above the uproar.

"She is beautiful, and she has a fine figure, and lovely hair—just the kind you used to admire. Why can you not do this for me, Stephen? Why can you not let me alone and allow me to be happy?" All of which did not make matters any clearer to the puzzled girl, although at the same time it failed utterly to awaken the least tremor or thrill of fear. So far it was a comedy. Kate Kamp slept the sleep of the just and the prosperous, not in her own section of the twin bed, but in that which Mrs. Townsend had explicitly made her understand to be reserved for the repose of her husband's erratic spirit. She had made the transfer one night, impelled by the same fanciful whim whereby the portrait of that same gentleman was now wont to occupy the chair opposite during meals, and to whom she had grown accustomed to address the miscellaneous remarks formerly bestowed upon the parrot. "For, after all," she sentimentally reasoned, "isn't a dead man in a picture better than a living bird in a cage?"

One afternoon, when she returned from her half-holiday excursion, Mrs. Townsend met her with a serious, troubled face. "Miss Kamp," she asked solicitously, "do you not sleep well?"

"Oh, yes, very well indeed, thank you. Why do you ask, Mrs. Townsend?"

"Why, my husband complains that someone disturbed him terribly last night. He has been away, out of town, for some time; in fact, I believe he said he hadn't spent a night at home since you came until last night."

"Oh, he has been away then," Kate faltered. So that explained, perhaps, why she had not been disturbed as had her short-lived predecessors.

"Miss Kamp," continued Mrs. Townsend,—“Miss Kamp, I do not believe you would deceive me about a matter which so concerns my happiness. You did not sleep in—in Mr. Townsend's bed last night, did you?"

"Why, certainly not," was the unblushing falsehood, the first that it had become necessary to tell the trustful Widow.

"There now, I was sure I was right," triumphantly argued the older woman. "I told my husband he must be mistaken, but he says he wasn't. He insists he got in about midnight, and found you in his bed, and that he had to sleep in the one next the wall. You are quite sure, Miss Kamp, that you made no mistake? You are quite certain you were in your own bed?"

"Absolutely certain, Mrs. Townsend."

That night Kate tumbled into the outside bed as usual. "That woman is something more than a spiritualist, she's a lunatic," she said to herself as she fell to sleep. Before long, however, she awoke. It was something unusual for Kate Kamp to wake in her sleep. She woke suddenly, with an uncomfortable feeling, and jumping out on the floor, turned on the light. She surveyed herself in the glass. Then she slowly and carefully made up the bed she had left, turned out the light, and crawled into her own section next the wall. For the first time in her life Kate Kamp had been afraid. After that she slept no more in Mr. Townsend's portion of the twin beds.

#### IV.

KATE KAMP had occupied her lucrative position for some four months, and was about to sit down to her solitary little dinner,—solitary save for the presence of the faithful Mullany, and the portrait perched across the arms of the chair at the other side of the table. Mullany had served the soup and was carving the fowl, when the door-bell rang.

"Gracious! That must be Mrs. Townsend," she whispered. "Help me put this picture back on the wall before you go to the door, Mullany."

Together they lifted the heavy frame, but as the waiter was about to catch the wire on the hook, the latter rattled down from the moulding to the floor.

"Oh, dear! what shall I do? I can't find it!" Kate cried in vexation, as she groped about on the floor under the couch, while the bell continued to ring furiously and the waiter stood patiently with the picture held in midair. "Get down and help me find it, Mullany. Mrs. Townsend simply mustn't know what I've been doing, or she will be terribly vexed."

So interested did the couple become in the fruitless search for the missing hook that neither heard the click of the latch-key nor the foot-falls coming down the velvet-carpeted hall.

"What's the matter?" asked a deep base voice, with a suddenness that made the girl and the waiter jump to their feet to confront a big bronzed man standing in the curtained doorway. He was a handsome, distinguished-looking man of the world, on the sunny side of middle

age. His eyes were dark blue, merry, and roving. His face was smooth-shaven. His hair was touched with gray about the temples.

"Mr. Townsend!" exclaimed the housekeeper and the waiter in the same breath, as they looked from the man to the pastel.

"Certainly, why not?" laughed the man, depositing his hat and walking-stick on the corner of the sideboard.

"But how did you get in?" demanded the housekeeper.

"With my latch-key, of course," he replied. "Funny, isn't it, how I've held on to that latch-key all these years. We've been like brothers, he and I. It seemed I couldn't lose this insignificant little bit of twisted iron. I have come through all sorts of strange adventures and had many narrow escapes, but my latch-key has never failed me. I was robbed in Tokio, I was held up and beaten in my journey across Cochin China, I've been chased by elephants in India, and burned out in a ramshackle old hotel at Port Said, but after each one of those fracasos, when I got myself together, I always found this latch-key to Suite 17 safe in my vest pocket," and the speaker drew forth the enchanted memento and passed it to the wonder-stricken Kate for inspection.

The wraith, for so it seemed he must be to the two bewildered people who still stood as if transfixed, then helped himself to the cigars on the sideboard and handed one to Mullany. "Where's Mrs. Townsend?" he asked abruptly, biting the end of his cigar in most unghostly fashion.

"I am expecting her here almost any minute," Kate was able to reply.

"Any objection to my smoking?" inquired Mr. Townsend, drawing a match-safe from his pocket.

"Not at all," answered the girl.

"Has she been out long?"

"Yes, quite a while."

"I suppose so. Felicia always was a gadder. And, by the way, I do not believe I have ever had the pleasure of meeting you before, my dear young lady. Or, possibly, you have outgrown my recollection. I've been gone seven years now."

"No, you have never met me before, Mr. Townsend. I am Miss Kamp."

"A friend of my wife's, I suppose?"

"Oh, no, merely the housekeeper." Here Mr. Townsend went to the sideboard and poured out three glasses of Scotch and soda.

"And now you will both drink to my health, will you not?" he asked, handing a glass to the housekeeper with one hand, and one to the waiter with the other. "Will you not propose a toast, Miss Kamp?"

"Here's to the return to life and the continued good health of the late Mr. Stephen Townsend," the girl said mechanically. She was still dazed with the suddenness of the resurrection.

"Well, I wouldn't have given Felicia credit for such good taste

in the selection of whiskey. She's improving," he remarked, draining his glass. "And say, Miss Kamp, if you don't mind, suppose we don't wait on my wife, but sit right down to dinner. I see it is all served, and I am ravishing hungry."

In a few moments all restraint and embarrassment had disappeared on the part of the housekeeper, who now laughed merrily at the story of adventure which Mr. Townsend related. Then it came Kate's turn to explain how she came to be there. He smiled in approbation as she repeated the stipulations of the "Personal."

"Auburn hair, pretty, good figure," he chuckled, casting sly, humorous glances at the pretty, animated face of the narrator. "Well, I must say, Miss Kamp, that you fill all the requirements perfectly."

"But what difference could it have made whether my hair was red or black, whether I did or didn't like music and cards?" Kate insisted.

"Well," drawled Mr. Townsend, as he mixed the salad dressing—the waiter had been dismissed with instructions to come back later for the dishes—"well, now, my dear Miss Kamp, you are asking me a question which, if I answer truthfully, will be rather embarrassing to me. I always admired your style of beauty, and I like music and cards, which my wife never did: so I suppose she thought the best way to keep my spirit at home was to give me the things I had liked in the flesh, and which, if she had possessed, I've no doubt we might have got along together better than we did."

"Yes, Mrs. Townsend realizes that now, herself," said the girl, hastening to the absent wife's defence. "I have heard her say that if she had to live her married life over again there would be many things differently managed."

"Now I wonder what she meant by that?" the husband, still unconvinced, mentally queried himself, while aloud he remarked, "I wonder why it is that women always find out those things when it is too late?"

"Too late!" she cried. "But why too late? You can begin all over again, right where you left off seven years ago."

"And you'll stay right on and keep house for us?" he asked.

"But Mrs. Townsend won't live here any more, I believe. You will go to live in a hotel, will you not?"

"Most emphatically no!" Mr. Townsend responded vigorously. "No hotel life for me. I've been drifting about too long. There isn't a hotel between New York and Nagasaki that I haven't tested, and I've come to the conclusion that nothing comes up to a nice, cosey, little apartment. Don't you like it? Isn't it all right here?"

"Yes, indeed, everything is beautiful and very convenient, only your shower-bath won't work."

"Oh, damn the—I beg your pardon, Miss Kamp,—confound the

shower-bath! Isn't that in running order yet? Why, I've spent a fortune in plumbing-bills trying to make that thing work."

"Stephen! my husband!" screamed a woman's voice. The couple at the table had not heard Mrs. Townsend's quiet entrance, nor the frou-frou of her draperies as she came down the hall. She stood transfixed with terror, her deep-black eyes riveted upon the apparition in her husband's chair. A tall, black-whiskered gentleman, of a studious aspect, supported her with his arm.

"Why, Felicia, old girl, how are you?" exclaimed Mr. Townsend, jumping from his seat and rushing to greet her with outstretched arms. But Mrs. Townsend shrank back in terror, and threw herself convulsively in the arms of her companion.

"Felicia! Felicia! what is the matter? Don't you know me?" but she had fainted away in the arms of the stranger, who carried her to the couch.

"Well, this is a pretty mess," commented the returned husband. The other man was chafing his wife's hands and calling her by endearing names, while Kate Kamp poured cold water on her face.

"Who the devil are you, anyway?" he burst out at last.

"Sir," said the stranger, dropping Mrs. Townsend's limp hand and straightening himself up,—“sir, I am Dr. Ovid McSwiggin, and I am engaged to be married to the lady; and now will you tell me who the devil you are?"

"Me! Why, I am Mr. Stephen Townsend, and I have already married the lady."

"Well, my dear sir," replied Dr. Ovid McSwiggin, not in the least disconcerted,—“my dear sir, all I can say is that there is a mistake somewhere, and it's up to you and the special coroner appointed by his Excellency the Mandarin of the Chin Song district of Upper Tartary to prove where the error lies."

"Ah, I see," said Mr. Townsend meekly,—“I see. I am officially dead."

"Exactly," returned Dr. Ovid McSwiggin.

"And what did you say was the name of the place where I—where my demise occurred?"

Dr. McSwiggin adjusted his eye-glasses, which he wore fastened to his coat by a long gold chain, and drew from his breast-pocket a legal-looking document. "Mr. Townsend, this document proves you to have died on or about July 22, 1894, at Foo Chee, Chin Song district, Upper Tartary. You were sat upon by the Mandarin's special coroner, appointed at request of our American consul, and you were found to have met death by means and cause unknown."

"Well, I guess I'm dead all right. I don't dispute the Chinaman's word. Have a cigar, Dr. McSwiggin."



During this colloquy the lady had revived, thanks to the housekeeper's ministrations. She opened her eyes just in time to see her husband and her fiancé bite off the ends of two fat, black cigars and exchange a lighted match with all the amiability in the world. "What does it all mean?" she gasped, looking up into Kate's face.

"Why, that I'm alive, that's all, Felicia," answered Mr. Townsend. "But don't let a little thing like that worry you," turning once more to Dr. McSwiggin. "I'll own it's no more than I deserved. I hadn't any right to expect anything else, and I'm perfectly willing to abide by the consequences and allow my wife to get a divorce."

There was something suspiciously magnanimous to Mrs. Townsend in Mr. Townsend's voice and face as he delivered himself of these contrite words of resignation and relinquishment. She stole a glance to the housekeeper, on whom her husband's eyes rested from time to time.

"We can easily adjust financial matters," he continued, as he drew forth a bundle of papers from his pocket. "You will have a liberal dot. I've just heard from my lawyer, who met me last night at the pier, that 'Old Reliable' wasn't such a bad investment after all. Go ahead and get a divorce, Felicia, if you want it. Don't mind me."

"But, but," stammered the prostrate lady, "I have already gotten it, Stephen."

"Got what?"

"A divorce."

"From me?"

"Yes, Stephen."

"Well, I'll be hanged!"

The Doctor again adjusted his eye-glasses, and once more had recourse to his breast-pocket, from which he produced another legal-looking document and handed it to his fiancée's late husband. "It was formally granted yesterday," he began to explain. "Mrs. Townsend wanted to make sure of everything being absolutely proper and correct, and, although we have ample proofs of your decease, we both thought it best to make things doubly certain."

"I see," said the divorced husband, handing back the papers unopened. "I am perfectly willing to take your and Felicia's word for it that everything is legal and strictly proper. And now, Felicia," turning to his former wife, "I wish you'd tell me something about this comic opera you've been conducting while I was gone. What on earth put it into your head to advertise for a red-headed housekeeper, even if you had gone into spiritualism?"

Mr. Townsend laughed good-naturedly as he puffed his cigar and looked across the room admiringly at Kate. Mrs. Townsend had now risen to a sitting posture.

"There is nothing to tell, Stephen, except that I got interested in

spiritualism shortly after your death—I mean, that is, shortly after your disappearance and the subsequent report that reached us from China. The medium at the séances told me that I had mediumistic powers myself, and offered to help me develop them so that I could talk to you myself, at home, without the embarrassment of a third party's presence."

"I see," nodded Mr. Townsend, "a sort of private telephone exchange with the spirit world. How much did she charge you for the lessons?"

"Oh Stephen, haven't you any sense of reverence?"

"No, my dear, not so much as I have a sense of humor. But go ahead. What next?"

"Nothing, except that I called up your spirit every day and talked to it."

"The deuce you did! Oh Felicia! you were always an easy mark." He started to laugh, then suddenly checked himself. "And what then?"

"Well—well, I met Dr. McSwiggin, here,"—laying her hand affectionately on that gentleman's coat-sleeve,—“and we grew to love each other, but when I told you I expected to marry him you refused to release me."

"The deuce I wouldn't?"

"Now, Stephen, don't laugh. It's a serious matter. You not only refused to release me, but you would not allow me to give up these apartments, where I continued to live for two years after you went away. Then the idea came to me to—to—to—to—" The lady stammered painfully and looked beseechingly at the housekeeper.

"To what?" demanded the ex-husband.

"Why, to hire a housekeeper to run things here for you. I had I don't know how many before I found Miss Kamp. None of them would stay as soon as they got an inkling of what they were really doing."

"But why were you so particular about getting pretty girls to look out for my comfort?"

"Because I wanted to make you as happy as possible. I knew you were always crazy about auburn hair—you remember that little——"

Mr. Townsend put up a warning hand. "Yes, yes, Felicia, I remember it perfectly. You need not repeat the incident. What I want to know is your ultimate object. How did you expect to dispose of me eventually, so long as I refused to leave the premises or allow you to marry the Doctor?"

Mrs. Townsend turned and looked at Kate, who now sat beside her on the couch. "I thought," she answered,—“I thought you maybe would fall in love with your housekeeper and forget about me."

Kate Kamp blushed at this frank confession from Mrs. Townsend, and when she turned her head to hide her confusion it was only to blush still more painfully as she met the gaze of a pair of admiring eyes fastened steadily upon her.

"Miss Kamp," said the owner of the eyes, "what do you wish to do, accept me and suppress the story, or——"

"Suppress what!" screamed Mrs. Townsend. "You don't think there's any danger of it's getting into the papers?"

"That all depends on Miss Kamp," replied Mr. Townsend enigmatically, still looking eagerly at the girl.

"On Miss Kamp?"

"Yes. Miss Kamp writes for the papers."

"Oh Miss Kamp!" Mrs. Townsend began to cry. "I never would have thought it of you. I trusted you as I would have trusted my own sister."

"And you can still continue to trust me," declared Kate, as she took the lady's hand and turned significantly to the man on her other side.

"You won't write anything about it?" she asked.

"Certainly not," responded Kate.

"And you'll continue housekeeping for Mr. Stephen Townsend?" that gentleman inquired with an interest about which there could be no mistake.

"Yes," she answered slowly, "if I don't wake up to-morrow morning to find that it was only a dream."

But it was all true. The next day the papers recounted the romantic story of "A Modern Enoch Arden." The disappearance and death of the well-known New Yorker was vividly recalled. The fact too that his wife had only a few days before his return obtained a Dakota divorce on the technical grounds of desertion was likewise reënforced upon the memory. The very next week the same journals printed notices of the marriage of Mrs. Felicia Townsend to Dr. Ovid McSwiggin, the fashionable occultist and magnetic healer. Of the wedding of Mr. Stephen Townsend and Miss Kate Kamp, however, there has not yet a word appeared in any metropolitan newspaper, but one week after that event the Sweetwater (Nebraska) *Independent* printed the following item under "Haps and Happenings:"

"Mrs. Ebenezer Kamp got a telegram from her daughter Kate Wednesday morning, saying she had just been married and was about to sail for Europe. Either through the error of the operator, or the oversight of the sender, the telegram did not state the name of the lucky man. Our congratulations, however, to whomever he may be."



# NEIGHBORS

*By Abbie Farwell Brown*



DOROTHY BEACON was quite unaware that she was an object of interest to her next-door neighbor. This was not strange, for the twin dwellings were not in the fashionable quarter of the city, and even on the Avenue it is a wise woman who knows her own neighbor.

The house adjoining bore in its window wistful printed signs of emptiness unsatisfied. In the eye of the hungry boarding-house one can usually read little Oliver's appeal for "more." But the hall bedroom in the third floor front of this particular boarding-house was no aching void. From its window the admiring eyes of Miss Fanny Bate, typewriter, had in a year's off-hours watched the incomings and outgoings of Miss Beacon, her feminine ideal.

In the earlier days it had seemed to Miss Bate, fresh from rustic amenities, the obvious thing that she and Miss Beacon should become friends. But, as the long, lonely days went by, Dorothy came and went her joyous way, and the paths of the two seemed as far from meeting as at first. Fanny discovered that in the city people do not call upon new neighbors in tentative friendship. How then was one's wish to be discovered? She concluded that chance must bring them together.

More than once she had met Miss Beacon on the street and had shot timid glances of recognition. But Dorothy passed, always oblivious of the neutral-tinted figure hesitating on curb or crossing. Dorothy was not snobbish, she was merely preoccupied. She prided herself upon her catholic sympathies, but she instinctively sought contrasts, and her train of thought whizzed between those far termini, Society and the Slums, with no way station. Her charity was of the kind which begins as far as possible from home.

Late one spring afternoon Dorothy was crossing the Common on her way home from a tea. The sun slanted through the trees pleasantly and dabbled with golden reflections the mild surface of the pond. A small, ragged child was playing alone on the curbing, reaching out carelessly over the water. Even as Dorothy passed the child lost her balance and splashed forward. Instantly Dorothy ran to the rescue, and, forgetting her dainty raiment, without much difficulty succeeded in dragging out the frightened mite.

"Oh you poor little thing!" she cried, "what am I going to do with you? Where do you live, Baby?" But the child wailed unintelligibly. Dorothy looked about for assistance.

At this moment a little, brown figure hurried up from the other side of the pond. Fanny Bate, on her way home from the office, had seen the rescue with mingled emotions. Here was her heroine in difficulty. Perhaps this was the chance she sought to insert the wedge of friendship. She approached with heightened color and shining eyes.

"I saw it all from the other side," she said in timid admiration. "How quick you were! Can't I do something to help you? Here, let her have my golf-cape to keep her warm," and she pulled the wrap from her shoulders. But the child drew away from the new-comer and clung, roaring, to the other's skirts. Dorothy knelt beside her and gently insinuated the cape about her. "Now tell me where you live, Baby," she cooed, with a caress on the dripping curls. The child sobbed out the number of an obscure and dubious street.

"Salvation Alley—oh, yes, I know where that is," said Dorothy briskly; "I will get her home in no time."

"But you oughtn't to go alone," exclaimed Miss Bate. "It's not a nice part of the city, is it? Let me go with you."

Miss Beacon was not used to suggestions. "Oh, no, indeed, thank you," she said. "I can go quite well alone. I visit the North End often in my charity work. But I think I will take a carriage." She stooped to take the child's hand.

"Polly tired!" wailed the little one. "Lady carry Polly," and she put up her dripping arms.

"Oh, let me!" cried the other girl, stepping forward eagerly. "It won't hurt my old dress." But the baby set up a howl.

"No! Want *pretty* lady!" she cried, turning to Dorothy with emphatic preference. The girl smiled without a trace of conceit. "You see, I must go," she said. "Thank you very much, but it will be all right when we are in the carriage." But at the word she stopped and her face flushed.

Miss Bate was hesitating, disappointed at the turn of affairs, when Dorothy changed her mind. "Excuse me," she said; "if you will go with me, after all, and if you will lend me the money for the carriage, I shall be greatly obliged. I forgot that I have not my purse with me."

Fanny Bate had in her bag her week's salary. "Oh, yes," she smiled joyfully, "I shall be so glad. It is so much nicer for two to do an unpleasant thing together, isn't it?"

Dorothy picked up the child, and the rescuers made their way to the street, where Fanny hailed a cab and they were soon rolling northward. Once in the cab, the baby fell asleep, and Fanny subsided into

bashfulness. The joy of being thus suddenly face to face with her adored filled her with self-consciousness. But Dorothy beamed with affability, and soon they were chatting about the queer and quaint corners of the old city, which Fanny apologized for not knowing better. "I am a stranger here," she said. "I know little of the city and very few people—yet."

"You will soon find yourself at home," said the other girl. "I know that strangers say we are cold and hard to approach, but I don't believe it." She smiled so winningly that Fanny Bate's heart beat with triumph. The gates were opening!

"I am sure they are not all so," she said with an answering smile. But at this moment the cab rattled to a stand-still and the driver announced with deprecatory accent, "This be the number you towld me, Miss."

"You had better tell him to wait," suggested Dorothy as she lifted out the sleeping child. "I don't want to walk home, do you?" And Fanny said "No," cheerfully deferring the thought of the cabby's charge, which on a less vital occasion would have seemed extravagance. Mounting the rickety stairs, they found at last the baby's mother and restored her missing penultimate youngest. Then, amid voluble thanks from the woman and howls of bereavement from the child, they "marched down again" to their chariot.

"Drive to Number 10 King Street," commanded Dorothy, instinctively giving her own address to the driver,—“or shall I take you home first?”

"Oh, it makes no difference; to your house first, if you please." Fanny smiled, thinking what little difference, indeed. And so the cab rumbled back to respectability.

It was a wonderful journey to Fanny Bate, for now she had the other girl wholly to herself. In the simplicity of her soul she longed to express her pent-up admiration, her longings of the past year, but, unskilled in conversational manœuvres, she knew not how to direct the talk into a personal channel. Dorothy skimmed over cheerful generalities with an easy grace that Fanny found entrancing, which seemed to her familiar, not to say confidential. What fortune to have won this wonderful creature for a friend!

The half hour of their ride was almost over, too soon for at least one of them. The cab turned into King Street. Dorothy interrupted her own gay gossip: "Here we are—or here at least I am. And now you must give me your address, so that I can pay you to-morrow for this ride which I have borrowed."

Fanny flushed. "Oh, no, indeed!" she exclaimed, "it was my share of the adventure. I will gladly give you my address,"—she glanced whimsically up at the dingy boarding-house, almost opposite

to which the cab had stopped,—“but you must not pay me. It has been such a pleasure—this little adventure with you, Miss Beacon.”

Dorothy stared. “Why, you know my name!”

“Oh, yes. I live next door to you. I have seen you a great many times.”

“You live here?” Dorothy glanced at the boarding-house with its sordid sign, at Fanny Bate’s costume as the latter paid the cabman from her slender purse. Fanny turned to her smilingly, but Dorothy interrupted the smile. “I do not want you to pay for the cab,” she insisted. “It was my own affair and I asked you to help. I shall send in the money to-morrow,” but she hesitated at the sight of the distress in Fanny’s face.

“Please don’t say any more about it. I am so glad to do it. It is my chance”—in her turn Fanny hesitated. How could she make Miss Beacon understand? Dorothy saw that for some reason she must not press the point, but was as far from fathoming Fanny’s thought as little Polly would have been.

“Well,” she said reluctantly, “if you insist, I will say no more. But—well, I thank you very much.” She shrugged her shoulders, then held out her hand. She was embarrassed and ill at ease, not knowing how to meet a King Street neighbor. “I did not know we were such near neighbors,” she remarked. “But, of course, in a city like this one never expects to know who lives next door. I don’t remember ever to have seen you before to-day.”

Fanny smiled wistfully. “I have seen you from my window often;” her tone was tentative; she waited. Dorothy smiled again, gathered her skirts, and turned to the flight of steps.

“I have a ruined gown, but I am glad we happened to be there when the baby fell in, aren’t you?” she said, and nodded herself out of sight. The other girl slowly ascended the parallel flight of steps, and, drawing her latch-key, let herself into the boarding-house.

“Yes, I’m glad,” she said. “I shall have to give up going to hear Bernhardt; but it was worth it,—oh, yes, it was worth more to spend an hour and a half with *her*. If only—but this is the beginning and the end of it, I suppose. She didn’t even ask my name! Next-door neighbors; as she says, what does that count for in a big city? Neighbor is a queer word anyway. I guess it doesn’t mean anything except in the country—and in the Bible.”

And she mounted to her cold little room with a sigh.

# THE PRICE OF FAME

BY

MAUDE ROOSEVELT

(BARONESS MUMM VON SCHWARZENSTEIN)

"Life is too short for any bitter feeling ;  
Time is the best Avenger if he wait ;  
The years speed by, and on their wings bear healing ;  
We have no room for anything like that.  
This solemn truth the low mounds seem revealing  
That thick and fast about our feet are stealing ;  
Life is too short."

—ELLA WHEELER WILCOX



PHILADELPHIA  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT COMPANY

1902



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LIPPINCOTTS

## MONTHLY MAGAZINE

DECEMBER, 1902



## THE PRICE OF FAME

BY MAUDE ROOSEVELT

(BARONESS MUMM VON SCHWARZENSTEIN)

## I.

JOE MONROE and his wife belonged to that typically New England class of old-time respectability which bears upon its face the ostentatious self-satisfaction engendered by an existence of frugal routine. Considerably past middle age, they had enjoyed conjugal life for over thirty years on the wide-acred estate that had been in the family for many generations. The name, Monroe, was well known and respected in the county, for Joseph, the elder, a lawyer of high standing in Bridgeport, had boasted quite a degree of prominence among its people. The present Joseph, however, although heir to the firm, yet mild, character of his worthy progenitor, lacked his ability, being controlled more by his heart than his head, as palmists say.

It was upon her knowledge of this fact that Mrs. Monroe often depended, with cunning confidence, for the ultimate success of attacks planned in behalf of her second and best-beloved son, Herbert, whose life, as Sidney Smith said of his own, was passed "like a razor, continually in hot water or a scrape." Upon Herbert his doting parents had settled their ambitions, because of a certain domineering self-assertiveness that he had evinced in childhood, and which, in their innocent adulation, they had interpreted as cleverness. Money was scraped and saved during his precocious boyhood to enable him to take the course at Yale, where he studied electric engineering. It was hoped that he might through this pursuit become a great inventor, or at least a power in the world of science.

Sam, his brother, and elder by one year,—a taciturn, loosely jointed fellow of twenty at the time,—made no comment upon these proceed-

ings, although his limited education had been begun and finished in the public high-school of Bridgeport. He felt it just to give Herbert all advantages, having been reared to a full appreciation of his brother's superiority, and therefore made no objection to his having them, even at the cost of his own labor in superintending the farm. During the years of Herbert's absence he slaved silently, having the tale of his brother's prospective glory dinned forever in his ears as an incentive to work.

But after a time the story began to pall. It was Herbert, Herbert, on every side: and Mrs. Mortimer's daughter Helen, who lived on the adjoining place, never seemed to open her lips if it were not to speak of him. Helen Mortimer was five years younger than Sam, and in his quiet way he had watched her growing from a mere child, like some sweet, familiar flower of his garden. In time the tendrils of her influence penetrated into the deep, fallow ground of his nature. He felt them as the earth must feel the virtue-imbibing roots of its growth, offering to her secret influence a silent sacrifice of all that was best in him. He thought of her only as a thing to love, an incentive towards virtue and pure-mindedness; for he realized there could be no hope of her ever turning her thoughts from Herbert to him.

Things continued like this during the three years of Herbert's course at college; then occurred one of the first disappointments of that auspicious venture. Herbert returned home with vastly increased self-esteem and an outward polish, offset by inexcusable debt, and minus diploma and honors. Of course, it was a great blow to the family, and it became immediately necessary to sell part of the farm's stock and some of the land to cancel the prodigal's obligations. But the fellow had a way which was irresistible; he was adorably good-looking, and had made such good friends in the fashionable world that he soon accomplished a reconciliation with his parents and Sam—the latter readily forgiving without a murmur.

"You see, you good people have all spoiled me," Herbert would say, with his bright smile; "you've expected too much. I am not a Napoleon or a Frederick the Great; I'm only a son of my dear old Mamsey." And with that he would give Mrs. Monroe a hug that brought a crimson flush to her round, genial face. Mr. Monroe would cross his legs nervously with a glance of pride at his handsome son, whose cultured tone and seeming fluent knowledge made his guileless old heart swell with pleasure.

Herbert did not remain long at home; he was invited by a college friend, who had taken a fancy to him, to spend the winter in New York. To be the guest of Bobby Featherstone was not a matter to be sniffed at, and the Monroes recognized that such an opportunity might open wonderful possibilities to their beloved son. Bobby was not only

a millionaire in his own right, but held considerable sway as a rapid young sprig of that ostentatiously vicious community known as the "smart set" of the metropolis. Of course, the Monroes knew nothing of this; they were informed merely that he held power and an enviable position in the great city of New York.

One week spent in the peaceful atmosphere of his people's home was sufficient for Herbert. Helen's correct but unadorned beauty did not appeal to him; her shy and innocently revealed adoration bored him. He even secretly wondered at the irony of fate that had given him her love when the girl was so clearly suited to Sam.

Although Mr. Monroe was far from pleased by the little profit Herbert had made of his time at college and the sums expended upon him, he was easily persuaded to believe in the advisability of his son visiting Featherstone. Herbert explained it as merely a stepping-stone to great things that would ultimately add to the fortunes of all; and with this Sam heartily agreed, recognizing from his brother's very tone of voice that it would not be right to keep him in that provincial spot. Herbert always chose the most elegant language in speaking to his parents, the learnedness of which invariably silenced them; and they jogged along, still husbanding their ambitions for his future as the key-note of their existence.

Helen, who from early childhood had made Herbert her idol, was the only one who could not accept the thought of his departure with entire confidence and bravery. Her love was a secret she scarcely dared to acknowledge even to herself; and yet the thought that this long-looked-for return brought him for so short a time into her life stole the brightness from her lovely face.

Only Sam guessed what she suffered, for, long before even his brother had recognized the truth, his keen observation had detected her jealously guarded secret.

Mrs. Monroe was very fond of the girl, and often had her over to spend the day, especially when her idolized son returned for his vacations, to brighten and enliven the old house, entirely ignoring the probable consequence of such association.

Helen had a pretty voice, and was wont to sit at the old piano in the wide parlor, with its horse-hair furniture and large-framed family portraits, and sing simple little songs that pleased the old people and went straight to Sam's heart. Herbert always praised her in his gallant way, although the natural simplicity of her method invariably worked on his nerves, for, unlike the others, he had been accustomed to hear cultured singers during his days at Yale.

One evening, three days before his departure for New York, while Helen was singing "Ben Bolt" she glanced up as he stood leaning gracefully against the piano and surprised a half-contemptuous smile in his eyes.

Instantly her voice broke; she was unable to continue. On recognizing what he had done, Herbert was sorry, although the incident secretly amused him.

"Why did you stop singing so suddenly to-night?" he asked later, as he drove her through the dusk to the Mortimers' place.

"Because—you were laughing," she returned softly.

"Laughing? What nonsense! My dear little girl, I love to hear you sing."

Helen could make no response; already her heart was full almost to breaking at the thought of his approaching departure, and these gentle words threatened to set free an avalanche of tears. She sank farther back in the buggy and remained silent, hearing her heart beat loudly and fearing that he too might notice it.

Herbert felt the shy movement, and, comprehending the significance of her silence, drew the horse to a walk.

"Are you offended with me?" he asked in the tone of tender appeal he knew so well how to employ.

"No." The word was scarcely audible, and he could hear her quickly drawn breath as she sought to conceal the emotion that was slowly getting mastery of her.

In a moment he had her small, quivering hand in his. "What a funny child you are!" he murmured, fixing his fine eyes upon her. Helen turned away in confusion; he could see the delicate flush steal up her slender throat and dye the little ear from which her soft, wavy hair was brushed back in such conventional sleekness. "Are you sorry to have me go?"

She raised her hand frantically to escape his hold, feeling the tears rush suddenly to her eyes, but he held it firmly, drawing her closer to him. "Tell me, are you sorry?"

Feeling that embrace about her for which she had secretly longed during the months of his absence, Helen grew faint. She sank to it weakly, helplessly; and, burying her face on his shoulder, sobbed like a child.

Herbert had not been prepared for this: although during his college days he had had varied experience with young women, he had never before seen one in tears. For an instant it bewildered him. Helen was so unlike the girls he had known while at Yale that he had always instinctively treated her with a sort of contemptuous reverence, but as he now comprehended how yielding she clung to him in the helpless confidence of her innocent love, a thrill of youthful excitement prompted him to gather her closer in his embrace.

"Kiss me," he whispered, "if you love me."

They heard the sleepy creaking of the buggy moving slowly through the soft-scented twilight, and the subtle perfumes of spring entered their senses with insidious influence.

Under the soft and sensuous excitement of the hour Herbert's self-indulgent nature awoke suddenly to a keen, though superficial, delight in feeling her quivering and submissive in his arms. His brain reeled: he gently pressed back her tossed head until he could see the tearful gray eyes brilliant with a love she dared not speak, the lips parted by frightened breathing, the soft face flushed with the first glow of love.

As his lips met hers an unworthy thought was born of the moment's intoxication. Why had he so long ignored her too evident adoration? There were yet three days—it would relieve the monotony!

"Herb, don't leave me," she whispered breathlessly as he kissed her again, "I can't bear it; I shall die here without you!"

Her eyes looked into his with yearning trust, and something in them, some evidence of her innocent heart, awoke in him the innate nobility that his pampered and selfish existence had not yet wholly extinguished. There came to him a revulsion of feeling; he sat upright and released her.

"I must, worse luck!" he said, patting the little hand that still clung to his. "But I'll come back—never fear; and then we shall have a great time."

"But when—when?" she pleaded.

"Oh, before long." He did not for a moment appreciate that he had done the girl any harm in that momentary indulgence of himself, but the reaction embarrassed him. He was at a loss how to act in order to quiet her, to make her realize that he had meant nothing.

Helen could not realize this: the evil was done. In taking her virgin kisses he had in a sense taken possession of her. In that first delicious hour of her life her spirit had voluntarily submitted to his proprietorship, although he had not consciously exerted it.

To do him justice, Herbert was sincerely regretful of the episode after he had disengaged himself from her tenderly clinging hands at her aunt's gate. The fascinating artificiality and subtlety of city-bred girls had spoiled him for one so fresh and real as Helen. Her unconcealed devotion for him was not alluring; he preferred the coquettish playing of more worldly women. Everything provincial vexed him; he hungered for excitement and sensations, and by his wonderful stories of life in the big cities he had already conveyed to Helen's impressionable nature a little of this hunger.

It was in dreaming of him continually in connection with that life of which she knew so little that she had come to invest him with the glamour of romantic perfections. Her imaginative temperament had fallen a prey not alone to his beauty, but to the atmosphere of a broader and brighter world that he seemed to carry about with him.

His conversation, his manners, his dress, were all so different to those of the men who lived in her vicinity; they excited her fancy, and represented something for which her nature had craved since first she could remember.

She did not see him alone again during the three remaining days of his stay at the homestead, but on the eve of departure his vanity, perhaps as much as any desire to make up for his obvious neglect, led him to give her a small gold coin as a souvenir to keep her interests alive in him.

They had all gone to Bridgeport to see him off, she and his mother and father and Sam, and this little occurrence had taken place in the big, three-seated wagonette, while she and Herbert sat together in the rear.

He spoke some honeyed words to her too, words born of previous flirtations and empty as they were subtly sweet; but Helen drank them in greedily and treasured them in her heart.

For many weeks she awaited trustingly for the coming of a letter, confiding her secret to no one, and existing in a sweet fool's paradise of dreams.

In time she was obliged, however, to be grateful for the rare news of Herbert that came in occasional letters to his parents,—beautifully worded and penned epistles, glowing with accounts of how he was fêted and sought after, and the wonderful possibilities that the opportunity offered for his future. These letters were a source of interest to the community for miles around, for Mrs. Monroe took especial delight in recounting to members of that rural and simple-minded aristocracy all that her beloved son was seeing and doing in the great metropolis,—how he visited at this house and that, how Mrs. Van Pilpher had taken him in her carriage to the opera, and the wealthy Mrs. Struthers had asked him to officiate as usher at the wedding of her daughter. The rural aristocracy received these enthusiastic bulletins with unbending reserve, but they nevertheless enjoyed them.

## II.

MEANWHILE Herbert in the glittering whirl of his new life was slowly and surely getting into serious difficulties. Robert Featherstone, although he could not look back farther than two generations with an unblushing countenance, was a young man of heart, and that keenness of calculation which is one of the legacies bequeathed by plebeian and commercial ancestry. He had ambitions for his friend, and, founding his expectations upon Herbert's unusually attractive personality, had set upon his making a brilliant marriage that would enable him to become a stable member of Bobby's "set" and remain in New York. But, unfortunately, his guest had not so strong a head

as he had appetites. The flattery of older women who were pleased to have so goodly a specimen of man to grace their board and box had had the effect it usually has upon innately vain natures who are plunged suddenly into a sea of excitement and adulation. Herbert never stopped to think of the morrow; he lived in the present, abandoning himself to the pleasures it offered recklessly, and heedless of consequence.

The thought of his parents and their loving expectations of his future never entered his head, save when it was necessary to invent some new and plausible excuse for requesting funds. Of Helen he never thought.

Bobby Featherstone had attempted to reason with him, all to no avail. He ended by refusing to loan him more money unless he made some effort to win Ethel Vanderstein, the daughter of an aged Crœsus, whom Featherstone had selected for him. She was a pretty, dark girl of slightly Jewish type, and had already evinced a decided predilection for Herbert. Featherstone entertained her lavishly in order to bring the two together.

In the beginning Herbert espoused the idea bravely, although he was not particularly attracted by Miss Vanderstein; but this, Featherstone assured him, was unnecessary.

"It isn't considered the correct thing to love one's wife nowadays," he had replied to Herbert's hinted objection. "Who does in our world? You can't name one man, who has been married a year."

"I know," said Herbert thoughtfully, "but it seems to be a pretty rank condition of affairs."

"Oh, I know what's troubling you!" ejaculated Featherstone irritably. "You've been fool enough to let Mrs. Burton fascinate you, and now you're going to let her make a fool of you."

Herbert was standing by the window of his friend's luxurious bachelor apartments, looking moodily down upon the restless sea of Fifth Avenue; he made no response, but his brows contracted angrily.

"You are the most hopelessly thankless creature to push along!" continued his friend with still greater show of ill-humor. "Look at me! If it hadn't been that I took advantage of every opportunity that was offered, do you think I would be where I am to-day?"

Herbert wheeled about. "What rot!" he ejaculated. "You, with nearly five millions back of you! Compare your position with mine!"

"Oh, that's all very well, but four or five millions counts for mighty little with the set I move in. It got me in—I don't deny it; but that doesn't prove it will keep me there—not by a long shot! We are just as much slaves to our principles—or lack of principles—as any dry-goods clerk. In whatever station you're in, Monroe, whether low or high, you're obliged to obey the rules that control it. As somebody has said, 'even Hell hath its peculiar laws.'"



"Yes, and even fools have their philosophy!" returned Herbert with an insolent smile as he stretched himself in a low chair and lighted a cigarette.

"The fool is he who doesn't recognize a plum when it drops in his mouth, and I would advise you, my boy, to wake up before it is too late."

Something stilted in the speaker's tone made Herbert look up; he took the cigarette from his lips.

"What do you mean by that?" he asked.

"I mean if you don't stop wasting your time running after Mrs. Burton, I'll wash my hands of you."

"What about Mrs. Jack?" demanded Herbert with a sneer.

"Pooh! a pastime. You don't suppose I'm making an idiot of myself over her, do you? Besides, she has a husband, and consequently the situation is safe. Although I don't think Estelle Burton would ever give you any serious trouble on that score. Young and pretty widows with little money are not looking for young and pretty boys without it, I can tell you. Besides, as you say, our situations are entirely different: I can afford to waste time; you can't."

Herbert puffed silently, his face expressing the ugly mood that was slowly getting possession of him.

"How do you expect this affair to end, I'd like to know," persisted Featherstone, goaded by his silence. "You will lose all your chances, then you will wake up to the ass you've been."

"Look here, Featherstone, I think you've preached enough for one day," said Herbert, with difficulty controlling his anger, not wishing to quarrel with his bread and butter if it could be avoided. "Suppose you dry up for a little while."

"I'm getting tired of talking to you," growled Featherstone ominously. "I know what it's coming to; Mrs. Burton is the very worst influence in the world for you; she would sacrifice any fellow for her own amusement."

"I would rather not discuss her, please," replied Herbert coldly. "I'm sick of these Sunday-school lectures, anyhow."

He got up and took his hat from the table. Featherstone watched him. "Are you going out?" he asked.

"Yes, I am not going to listen to this sort of thing any longer, that's certain."

"Well, don't forget I'm giving that dinner at Sherry's to-night for Miss Vanderstein; so be here in time to go with me, will you?"

"Oh, I shall be in time," returned Herbert wearily as he strode out of the room. He dreaded that dinner, with its interminable formality and, to him, uninteresting object. Ethel Vanderstein did not appeal to him in the slightest degree,—in fact, her personality was

somewhat repellant. Yet he felt that Featherstone's arguments were laid on a basis of truth, and that he expected him to propose that very evening, and had so arranged matters that he would be afforded an opportunity to do so.

As he strolled slowly up the broad avenue with its rush of vehicles and ceaseless tide of well-dressed pedestrians he turned the situation over and over in his mind. Would he marry her?—could he?

Immediately his thoughts reverted to the face that always haunted it, a small, high-cheeked, narrow-eyed face with a witchery of its own that was never seen in woman's face before. He recalled many of the Widow's characteristic little gestures, the subtle half-closing of her eyes, and an uncontrollable desire seized him to see her again.

He would propose to Ethel Vanderstein that evening; there was nothing else for him to do if he wished to keep in with Featherstone, but he meant to see Mrs. Burton for a little while first.

In his heart he recognized the logic in what his friend had said, although he would not acknowledge it even to himself. Estelle Burton certainly had acquired a peculiar and wholly controlling influence over him; her smallest wish was law; he felt her slightest change of mood as instantly and acutely as a photographic film feels difference in light and shade. He feared to contemplate to what an extent she might govern him, and yet the very fact that she possessed the power was a secret and ecstatic delight.

He turned into Forty-fifth Street and mounted the steps of her house.

The butler showed him into a back room luxuriously fitted up as a library. Mrs. Burton was seated at the desk, apparently very much occupied in writing a letter. She did not look up.

"Sit down, Herbert," she said gently in a soft voice of indescribable charm, and possessing a rich, flute-like quality that seemed peculiarly in harmony with her slight, willowy person and the tasteful accoutrements of the room, "I shall be finished in a moment."

He threw himself familiarly upon a divan back of her, and allowed his eyes to follow the graceful lines of her beautiful form, and linger upon the soft, waving, dark hair that adorned her shapely head in luxuriant, glossy masses.

Every sudden movement of her arm or hand sent a thrill through him, as though she had touched him. He was impatient to have her turn, that he might look into her strange, unwavering gray eyes, and feel her attention fixed upon him.

Suddenly she arose and, without even glancing at him, crossed to the electric bell.

"Send this by messenger at once, Motley," she said as the butler appeared, and handing him the letter.

When she turned towards him Herbert was standing.

"I have just dispatched a regret to the much-heralded Burk-Vanhesser dinner," she said as she stood, with arms uplifted, before a tall French mirror, arranging a stray bit of hair.

"Why, I thought it was to be to-night," remarked Herbert in surprise, as he regarded the supple lines of her form, boldly revealed by the pose.

"So it is; I have sent a plea of illness. It has finished me with that house, probably, but there was nothing else to do!"

"Did you not wish to go?"

She sank upon the divan with a troubled look in her eyes. "There is to be someone there I could not possibly permit myself to meet. It was only by a most fortunate chance that I learned he is to be there."

A violent and jealous curiosity seized Herbert; he began to imagine all sorts of situations in her past that could render such an aversion possible.

"Some man?" he said awkwardly. "Why should you fear to meet any man?"

She regarded him an instant in cold silence. "May I ask who has given you permission to catechise me?" she asked with the rigorous severity women of her type are wont to exercise over men who have once shown themselves to be abject to their wills.

His eyes shifted before hers.

"You know what madness you breed in me when you mention any other man having a place—even a contemptible one—in your life."

"Well, you must get over that," she returned quietly; "even a woman's husband can't be so exacting in these days."

"I love you as no woman's husband has ever loved her."

Mrs. Burton smiled. "Very probably; that is saying little. The first thing a husband learns is that his wife is but an ordinary woman, and wonders why he tied himself to her."

"Your husband never learned that."

She arose precipitantly. "No," she said bitterly, "he didn't find me quite ordinary enough! He thought—but why talk of him? I have a dull evening on my hands,—a new experience! You must amuse me."

Herbert's heart leapt as he met her splendid eyes fixed upon him, half smiling and half challenging.

"If only I could," he murmured emotionally, "but when a fellow gets to my state he's such a dull dog."

"Well, we shall have dinner early. You will feel better after dinner. We must dine here, for no one else must know that I am not as ill as I pretended in my note."

The thought of dining with her alone, of having her all to himself

the whole evening, made his brain reel. It was a privilege seldom accorded him, and one he would almost rather have died than forego. As he was about to make an enthusiastic reply, he remembered Featherstone's dinner at Sherry's. A chilling disappointment prevented the words; he turned and paced the room with head bowed and brows contracted.

The Widow watched him. "Well, is this the way to receive the most flattering invitation I have ever extended to you?" she asked in a somewhat puzzled tone.

"Oh, I know!" exclaimed Herbert passionately. "It's just my luck!"

She turned on him coldly. "What is your luck?"

"Why, to have you ask me to do this to-night of all nights."

"Why?"

"Featherstone is giving a dinner; I promised to be there."

Mrs. Burton regarded him in significant silence.

"If you prefer to go to him," she said quietly, "go by all means. I shall send around for Dick Brockly—no, his wife is suffering from one of her bilious attacks; she looked as yellow as a duck's foot this morning! I couldn't stand Rogers, and there's no one else I can trust to know I am not ill. You will just have to stay, that is all!" She sank on the divan and with languid ease arranged a pyramid of cushions back of her.

"If it were not that he has asked this girl especially for me," said Herbert, still pacing restlessly.

"Oh, a girl!" murmured the Widow expressively; "now we have come to the pith of the matter. So you fear to offend this girl by remaining with me?"

"No—not in the least. I don't want to offend Featherstone. It will finish things between us if I don't turn up."

"Is Mr. Featherstone's opinion of such value? Pray, don't think of remaining if it means more to you than mine."

Herbert could not tell her all that it meant to him; he did not even dare to contemplate what the consequence was likely to be should he give way to the temptation she offered. It was only through Bobby Featherstone's patronage that he had been able to enter the set in which Mrs. Burton moved, and he knew that should he be thrown off by him without money and homeless, he would soon sink into oblivion.

"I don't know how I can manage it," he said in a vacillating tone. "They will expect me—it's rather late——"

"Send him a note. There are writing-things at that desk. A messenger can take it to him in ten minutes."

"If he knows I am here——"

"Why let him know? Say you have—broken your foot—been given

knockout drops—say you're dead!" She laughed wickedly, and sank deeper into the cushions.

Herbert looked at her lying back with supple grace, her lovely face smiling up at him with bewitching deviltry, her strange eyes half-closed and alluring.

"All right, here goes!" he exclaimed recklessly as he strode towards the desk.

### III.

WHEN Herbert returned that night Featherstone was asleep. This was a relief, for he dreaded going through the scene that he knew was in store for him, and which he felt in his heart he deserved. Until dawn he tossed restlessly, haunted by the memory of Mrs. Burton, living over again every thrilling moment he had passed with her, anticipating the morrow, when he was to see her again. She had promised to dance the cotillon with him at the Whitings' the following Saturday. This was a distinction he had scarcely hoped for; he knew there would be many to envy him, for Mrs. Burton's beauty and the high social position her husband had held gave her place among the most fêted of young matrons, for whose favor every man sought. It was not a small triumph for Herbert, coming as a stranger into these realms of wealth, with nothing to back him but his good looks and a wealthy friend.

The thought of Featherstone brought an appalling dread of their next meeting. He felt it to be more than likely that all would be over between them when he was asked to explain his absence from the dinner. What could he say?

In the note he had sent to excuse himself he had merely stated that he had been unavoidably detained and would explain later. With the rashness of a weak nature he had sought only to avoid the necessity of leaving Mrs. Burton, trusting to his quick wit to carry him through.

Now in the hour of nervous reaction, as he recalled the unpardonable offence he had offered his friend and the girl he had already somewhat compromised by too marked attention, he wondered what was to be the outcome of it. If Featherstone should carry out his oft-repeated threat and be done with him, where could he go? where obtain sufficient to live upon, even aside from the extravagances that had become necessities to him? There were flowers to be sent to Mrs. Burton for the Whitings'; how was he to get them?

With a groan he arose, threw on a dressing-robe, and paced about the room. "It's enough to drive any fellow to the dogs!" he growled, with the bitter self-compassion that was the one really softening emotion of which he was capable. "It's damnable to be situated like this. If he slates me, I'm lost, that's all." He stood by the window looking

upon the gray avenue, with its lines of closed windows, its barricaded shops, hushed in the unpeopled silence of early dawn.

A lank and treacherous-looking cat, its shoulder-blades protruding at each stealthy step, slinked across the street, confident in its supreme solitude.

Herbert's eyes followed it pensively. "I'll have to keep my temper with him, that's all," he thought. "I'll play the penitent act; that may bring him around."

It was a desperate condition, and he meant to catch at any straw offered, short of marrying Ethel Vanderstein. He knew that as her husband he would lose his position with Mrs. Burton. He felt pretty confident the latter would never regard him as anything nearer than a restricted lover, but this meant so much he could not be reconciled to resign it.

His vanity persuaded him that he could conciliate Featherstone, whose affection he might rely on. He was already greatly in his debt, a fact he used to excuse himself for the humility he intended to resort to.

As it turned out, however, Bobby was not as lenient as he expected; Herbert's defiance of his wishes in a matter of such importance was the last straw. They did not meet until that evening, on returning to the apartment to dress for a dinner. Herbert heard his host enter, and turned fearlessly to greet him.

"I'm sorry about last night, old fellow," he began, "but you see——"

"Oh, don't attempt any excuses," interrupted Featherstone in a sullen voice that might have warned Herbert of the uselessness of defending himself, "I know well enough where you were."

"I had a telegram from——"

"You were with Mrs. Burton!" cried Featherstone passionately. "Don't lie to me!"

"What rot!"

Featherstone faced him. They were in the little reading-room where they had spent so many hours in genial chat.

"Do you mean to say you were not with her?" he demanded.

Herbert did not hesitate, although the color left his face. "Of course I was not," he replied. "If you will give me half a chance, I'll explain——"

"Bah!" cried the other with a contemptuous gesture, "I want no excuses! I know her paper! You're a liar, and I want nothing more to do with you." He flung himself out of the room, banging the door.

Herbert stood dazed where he had left him. The blood rushed to his face, departing to leave it even paler.

The insult that had been hurled at him was quickly submerged

in his anxiety for his future, his terror of being thrown out now, just at the dawning of his social popularity. He thought of the injustice ruling his life; of the great things he might accomplish had he had one-half of Featherstone's wealth. He attributed his friend's unrelenting chagrin to jealousy, and spent the time while dressing alternately commiserating himself and imprecating Bobby.

The latter left the apartment without a word. As Herbert heard the door shut back of him, he set his teeth passionately. He had secretly hoped Featherstone would give him some opportunity before he left to offer an explanation and make up, so they might go to the dinner together. It would look funny, he thought, for them to appear there separately, especially as he, Herbert, was not so well known at the house.

"He thinks he can treat me like a child!" he said between his teeth as he tied his little white tie, "he can put his foot on me, because he has wealth!"

Some of his thoughts at the moment could not very well be put into words. He was savagely angry, and yet at the same time his mind was employed concocting a means whereby he might hope to bring Featherstone around in time to borrow enough to enable him to send Mrs. Burton some flowers. For the moment this was the most important matter in his life. It was impossible for him to dance the cotillon with her without sending handsome flowers; that attention was absolutely obligatory. As it was, he had scarcely five dollars in his possession, and his father had written he could spare him no more. Even Sam, to whom he had appealed several times, and never in vain, had sent him but fifty dollars instead of the hundred he had asked for, and accompanied the check with a note making it very clear that he would not again be able to help him.

However, the real seriousness of his position did not trouble Herbert so much as the immediate embarrassment. He was always sanguine of the future, with that egotistic faith in their own importance that makes insignificant natures rely on some omnipotent providence.

Before leaving the apartment he stopped in Featherstone's room to obtain a full view of himself in the long mirror there.

The room was fitted up like that of a prince; no conceivable luxury was lacking. The ceiling, like that in the front room, was a delicately tinted conception from the brush of Toujetti; the bed, a massive work of art in real bronze; the rugs, priceless Persians; every smallest feature had been chosen with the greatest care and after much discussion with connoisseurs.

When Herbert had viewed himself to his satisfaction he looked about him. A bitter smile curled his lip. He recalled hours of revelry that he and Bobby had spent in this sumptuous apartment; women of

high social standing who had not hesitated to come there to little suppers; others who had shamelessly sought his host there uninvited. He called up Bobby's round, snub-nosed face; his small, blood-shot eyes and graceless frame, and once more regarded his own tall and lithe form in the mirror. Why had everything been showered upon his unattractive friend, while he could not call a dollar his own?

In crossing to the door his eye fell upon some jewelry and a roll of bills lying in a carved ivory jewel-box that Featherstone usually forgot to close. Herbert paused. The roll was composed of ten-dollar notes; it was quite large, and must have contained something like a thousand dollars. Besides it, among the other things, was a valuable diamond ring that advice of others had made Bobby discard; should it disappear, he would scarcely have missed it.

There was no one near; the very silence and the vacancy of the rooms seemed to assume the character of a tempter's voice. Herbert thought of the flowers for Mrs. Burton; his heart began to throb fiercely.

He put out his hand and touched the bills, then drew it away. His breath quickened. He stood there staring upon the things, feeling unable to move or think clearly.

A bell rang someplace; he started violently, as though detected in a crime, and turned from the bureau.

"God! what am I coming to?" he groaned, as he strode out to the hall. "He leaves it open because he trusts his man—and I——"

Featherstone's valet approached him, coming from the front door. "A letter for you, sir."

Herbert's knees were shaking under him; he could not open the letter then, and did not even glance at the superscription until he had reached the street. He was surprised to see that it was from Ethel Vanderstein.

The very sight of her handwriting calmed him; all the cynicism and bitterness returned. Here was a woman for whom he cared nothing, who fairly threw herself at him. For the asking, he could indulge himself at her expense to the height of his bent.

How was it more heinous to rob Featherstone of a little of his superfluous millions, than to steal this girl's fortune under the cloak of marriage? It was rot and nonsense! At least, he would not be hurting Featherstone, and he certainly had already hurt Ethel Vanderstein.

Then the thought came,—why not marry her, and have some pleasure and comfort in life while he was young? There were not many young women of means who would be satisfied with a man who was merely attractive.

But the Widow's face rose up before him. He felt the nerve-



weakening charm of her influence steal over him. He remembered the thrilling glance of her half-closed eyes; the smiling, witty lips; the keen utterances that expressed her correct understanding of him and the world, and he returned to his philosophy, exalting what was propitious to his particular needs, and condemning what was not.

Under this spell of memory he thought of the next evening, of the flowers that she would expect, and a passionate rebellion made his blood hot as he realized that he could not possibly get her anything worthy with the small amount of money he had.

Suddenly an idea came to him, and the fact that he was only one block distant from the florist where Featherstone dealt, and where he had been accustomed to go in company with Bobby, made him act upon it at once. The bill would not be sent in for nearly a month, so the subterfuge would probably not be discovered before they had either made up or were parted for good, and after all, he thought, what he proposed doing was not such a crime.

He ordered Mrs. Burton to be sent on the morrow a superb cluster of lilies-of-the-valley and orchids, with no name enclosed, and had them charged to Featherstone's standing account.

#### IV.

IN consequence of this delay he was rather late in reaching Mrs. Wentworth's, although, fortunately for him, he was not the last. As it was, he was well enough pleased, for his tardy entrance attracted the attention of everyone present.

"Our mysterious Adonis," whispered young Mrs. Aperton, as he passed on his way to pay homage to the *débutante* of the affair, who sat at the room's farthest end.

He paused at once, having a particular penchant for young married women whose experience with the male sex led them to be delightfully personal in their conversation.

"Why mysterious?" he asked, bowing gallantly over her hand.

"You acknowledge yourself an Adonis then!" she exclaimed, laughing.

"I am everything you think me," he replied, "for your opinion is my being."

The smile faded gently on her delicately colored lips. She looked at him keenly, interrogatively.

"I like you," she said; "there is something spontaneous about you; and then—you are good to look at, and that is much in these days of blasé and dissipated youth."

He drew an odd-shaped, superbly upholstered bit of furniture nearer to her and seated himself.

"I am so glad you stopped me?" he murmured. "I was on my way to the bud."

"What! the worm was not tempted?" exclaimed Mrs. Aperton, and laughed mirthlessly. "She appears to be nice and pinky," she added, looking deliberately towards the young girl, who was giggling and gesticulating with two dull-looking youths.

"I can't stand very young women," said Herbert. "Their one object in life seems to be to make other people think they are having a good time."

Mrs. Aperton smiled. "Yes, and their one method of announcing it is by giggling."

"I wonder why it is that married women always have so much more charm than girls?" he asked, fixing his eyes intently upon her.

She glanced away wistfully, and replied with a significant note of sadness, "Perhaps it is because most of us have learned we made a mistake, and the hungering for something better wakes a chord of sympathy."

He leaned forward a little farther. "What man could ever feel himself worthy of a woman like you?" he whispered. "Only the madness of love could ever have endowed Aperton with the courage to ask you."

"The madness of love!" she repeated sadly, her eyes still turned from him in pathetic dreamingness. "What sins is it not accountable for!—and what sorrows!"

"Yes, and what joys!"

"If both are loving, perhaps; but marriage is seldom instigated by love on both sides."

"It should be."

"I know it should, but why is it that all lovable men are poor?"

Herbert closed his hand passionately and struck his knee. "I don't know!" he ejaculated with feeling. "It's wretched hard luck that any man should be poor—it's a crime! We can't do anything—we're misunderstood."

She looked at him thoughtfully. "Oh, no," she returned with quiet assurance. "It is not so bad for you, as it is for us women. I am well off now, and—unhappy; but I prefer all my unhappiness to going back to poverty."

"I know, there is no use scoffing at wealth," he said, "it's the thing that makes the world go round."

"When one has enough of it, yes,—when one is rich enough to buy off time-honored conventionalities."

His eyes told her that he understood.

"Oh, conventionality doesn't stand for much now, except in provincial towns," he returned. "All one needs is pluck enough to take

what falls to him, and enjoy it without attempting to share it with the world. The world never makes any attempt to share our sorrow, why should it pry into our joys?"

She smiled upon him benignly. "You are quite a philosopher, aren't you?"

Something in her tone embarrassed him slightly.

"Oh, I'm a little of everything!" he replied. "But at least I can reason this far, that as we have by our own wit and effort enhanced in value the few pleasures Heaven has bequeathed to us, why in the name of piety shouldn't we enjoy them?"

"How do you mean enhanced them?"

"Why, we have made them in every way more pleasant. The very fact that we restrict ourselves in certain things doubles our appreciation of them."

"That's true. The poet's words might be transcribed into—life is really not so beautiful, but that our seeing makes it so. But the difficulty is, we are afraid to recognize our own creation."

"Society is like an artist who has painted a beautiful nude Venus, and then immediately draws a veil over it, for fear the beauty might do harm. We can never see things quite so clearly and freshly as we do to-day, and we never can appreciate a thing in the same way twice. Why should we not take everything the minute it comes to tempt us? Every day we grow older, and the chance to enjoy things will never come again."

Mrs. Aperton laughed again, this time with real amusement. "Your philosophy contains dangerous teachings," she said pointedly. "But it appeals, although it would create a wild enough world if universally accepted."

"We are not talking of the common herd, but of ourselves," he returned. "There would be a wild world, if peasants drank champagne, stayed late in bed, and read volumes of modern philosophy!"

Heavy curtains on the left of the drawing-room were noiselessly drawn back at this moment, and the music, that until then had reached them faintly, now entered in clear strains from a wide be-palmed hallway that led to the dining-room.

In an alcove were installed a group of musicians in Hungarian costume. In their midst were two little girls, who arose as the curtains were drawn and entered the drawing-room, each with a basket on her arm filled with handsome boutonnieres of white violets. To these were attached small white cards bearing each a lady's name.

When Herbert was given his, he read the name quickly. "Jove! I've been given the bud!" he whispered.

"I'll wager I have been given that old fogie of a Major," returned

his companion with a contemptuous smirk. "In pity address to me a remark now and then, to keep me awake between courses, won't you?"

Herbert glanced towards the adjoining drawing-room. "Aperton isn't here, is he?" he asked.

"No, he is in Washington."

"May I see you home?"

"You may—Mrs. Wentworth has risen, fly for your bud! Here comes my hungry mate, nosing about wearily—thank Heaven, it isn't the Major!"

Herbert hurried over to the youthful Miss Whorts. "I believe I am to have the honor!" he said, offering her his arm.

"I saw you when you first came in!" she exclaimed, beaming upon him. "I tried to hypnotize you to come over here, but I see your will is stronger than mine; or perhaps it was Mrs. Aperton?" She glanced up at him insinuatingly. "Was it?"

"Oh, I felt your power upon me," replied Herbert genially, "but I was afraid to obey it because of the crowd you had about you; I hate crowds."

"Oh, but *why* didn't you come? There were only two with me; and, to tell you the truth, I know you would have brightened us up lots."

Herbert made some equally vapid reply, and wondered if Mrs. Burton would like the choice he had made in her flowers.

All during dinner he secretly watched Featherstone, who did not look in his protégé's direction, and as Herbert noted this he felt there was little chance of a reconciliation.

As he carried out his agreement to see Mrs. Aperton home, he avoided meeting Bobby at their departure, and was glad to give him a little more time to cool down.

On arriving at her house Mrs. Aperton asked him if he would care to come in to see some trophies she had received that day from a former admirer, who was in command of a regiment in the Philippines.

"Come in and amuse me for a little while," she added. "I am dreadfully blue, and I couldn't think of sleeping for at least three hours." She stood looking down at him from an upper step with one hand alluringly outstretched, and although his common-sense told him it would be wiser to leave her, a combination of conditions made him enter.

## V.

NEITHER he nor Featherstone arose the next day until after twelve. Their breakfasts were brought to them separately at that hour by Bobby's man, who, in obedience to the summons of his master, entered each room noiselessly, opened the windows for a moment to freshen the atmosphere, then carried to the young Sybarites' bedsides a large

silver basin of cold water, enlivened by a dash of *viniagre de toilette* with which to bathe their faces and hands. The breakfasts, served invitingly from the club next door, were as hot and tempting as could have been any light repast from the kitchen of Lucullus.

When he had finished, Herbert lay back in his comfortable bed, looking about him pensively. It would be hard, he thought, to give up all this luxury; it had become necessary to him; he wondered how he was ever to get along on nothing.

The thought of going to work and slaving for what had so far come so easily was not to be considered. The only thing to do was to make up with Bobby. Ever since their first meeting he had exerted a strong influence over Featherstone, and he did not believe that he could have entirely lost it. Impatiently acting upon this assurance, he made a false step by writing his host a few lines of fawning appeal and expressing his regret for what had occurred between them.

When the valet came for the tray, Herbert handed him the note to carry to his master.

There came no reply, and half an hour later he heard Featherstone leave his room and the front door of the apartment close back of him.

Herbert immediately recognized that he had made a mistake, and although he felt none of the keen humiliation that would have been the effect upon a more highly spirited man, his face darkened with anger. His pampered vanity rebelled against such treatment, in which he could only see the influence of mean jealousy on Featherstone's part. Now the question was, what was he to do? He intended to avoid Bobby until the next day, as he did not wish to come to blows with him until after the cotillon, but a final understanding was bound to come; he must be prepared!

He remembered Ethel Vanderstein's note, which he had not yet opened, and touched the electric bell at his bedside. The valet found the note in his overcoat pocket, and with it handed him a letter from his mother that had just arrived.

Miss Vanderstein's note made him laugh contemptuously. It was a foolish little appeal of girlish devotion.

"You are such a naughty boy," it went on, after the usual vapidly. "One can never depend upon you. But I did miss you very much last night; it took all the pleasure from the evening. Why are you like that? Really, I ought not to write to you, but I do want to see you. Will you come and dine with us to-morrow informally, before going to the Whiteleys' dance? Mother has given me permission to ask you, and we will be so glad if you do."

When he had finished reading it he lay back thinking. It seemed to be the only opening left him,—and yet! The old father was a close-fisted dog! While he lived no man would have much control of his

daughter's wealth. Besides, it would necessarily mean a severing of his relations with Mrs. Burton.

He tossed about and groaned. If only he could escape that fascination, he might marry this girl of money, and lure her away from her family's influence!

The situation as it then appeared was not promising, there was no alternative in sight. He might probably borrow a considerable sum from Mrs. Aperton, but only in return for abject devotion on his part, and this would anger the Widow!

He wearily took up his mother's letter. Perhaps she had succeeded in extorting something from the old man.

It contained, however, nothing more than twenty dollars from her own purse and a return railroad ticket to Bridgeport, with the information that Mr. Monroe was firm in his determination not to send him further assistance, although he was willing that he should return to the home of his parents and have the benefit of it with them all.

This proposition appeared too ridiculous to be even considered. He ground his teeth and uttered a profanity. "Go back! What do they think me? They ought to be proud to have one in the family a gentleman, instead of doing everything to down me!"

But as he perused the letter his ideas changed. It contained a bit of news that set him thinking in a new direction. Helen Mortimer's aunt had died, and Helen, who was now of age, had come into absolute possession of fifteen thousand dollars and the farm. If things came to the worst, he could go back, win Helen, and bring her to New York. A secret marriage—no one need know! He would have his liberty and the control of fifteen thousand!

The outlook had begun to brighten. He dispatched a note to Ethel Vanderstein regretting his inability to dine with her, and one to Mrs. Aperton containing a tender greeting and reminding her that he would be with her at dinner. This he sent by Featherstone's man with a dozen roses that he bade him buy on the strength of his mother's remittance. He did not wish to dine at Featherstone's club for fear of meeting him there; and although there had been no positive understanding that he should go to Mrs. Aperton, she had bade him come, and he was glad of the opportunity, being at a loss for other means of passing his time.

The afternoon stretched before him emptily. It was a mild, beautiful day in January. His nature longed for some indulgence,—a drive with Mrs. Burton!

Featherstone kept three horses and had several traps. If he could be sure he had gone to ride, Herbert thought he would order one of the traps up and take Mrs. Burton out.

He dressed quickly, his heart made light by new hope founded on a clever but diabolical scheme that had been suggested to him like an inspiration of evil by the news in his mother's letter.

Upon investigating, he found that Bobby's riding-clothes and crop were gone, a fact signifying that his host would probably not be back before five at the earliest, and while the valet was still absent he went to the telephone and called up Mrs. Burton to ask if she would care to drive. Upon receiving her acquiescence he connected with the stable and ordered Featherstone's high cart to be brought around at once.

"It must be here in fifteen minutes," he said. "Can you manage it?"

"Yes," came back the answer. "I'll have it there, sir."

Herbert was on the eve of that reckless disregard of all proprieties that comes at critical periods to those who have never known the refining influence of self-denial. In this hour, when he felt it might all be slipping from him, he was impatient, as never before, to indulge every propensity, however extravagant and unreasonable. He paced the room restlessly, counting the moments, and hoping to get out before the valet should return to criticise him.

At last, after what seemed like an hour, the cart was announced from the office below, and Herbert lost no time; he caught up his coat with a thrill of joyous anticipation of the pleasure before him.

As he was about to leave the apartment, Featherstone let himself in with a pass key.

## VI.

HERBERT, recognizing his host, shrank back; his color fled.

"Who had the impudence to order my trap around here?" demanded Bobby, his back to the closed door, and eying him with the fixed stare of an infuriated bulldog.

Herbert was speechless; for a moment his quick wit deserted him.

"Why the devil don't you answer," continued Featherstone, his rage fanned by the other's cowardice. "Did you do it? Did you have the damnable insolence to order my horses out?"

"I—I——" stumbled Herbert, then added with surprising coolness, surprising even to himself: "Look here, Bob, what's the use of going off the handle like this? I——"

"What's the use!" blazed the outraged Bobby. "I—— If you weren't such a mean, contemptible cur, I'd knock you down! But I wouldn't pay you the compliment, I wouldn't—— You're the most audacious, insolent dog any man was ever duped into befriending!"

"It's good taste of you to throw your hospitality in my face," sneered Herbert, knowing how the thrust would hurt one who posed as a stickler on proprieties of etiquette, "especially to a fellow who is still your guest."

"You've outraged all claim to decent treatment from me," he replied. "And let me tell you now, I don't consider myself your host

any longer! You've lied to me, not once, but a hundred times. You've—you've——"

Herbert, seeing him confused, smiled sneeringly. "Well, what more have I done that could excuse this exhibition of ill-breeding?"

Featherstone lurched forward to strike him with his riding-whip. "Don't you attempt any insolent speech to me!" he cried. "I'll teach you a lesson you'll never forget!"

Herbert pushed past him. "If anyone has anything to be ashamed of, it's you," he returned, smiling bitterly, "with your vile orgies here, your compromising of the wife of your——"

"God! you dare!" Featherstone, livid with rage, sprang at him like a wild-cat. Herbert beat his eager hands down with a cane grabbed from the hat-rack, and stepped back in time to escape him.

At the same moment the outside bell rang, and Bobby, expecting Mrs. Jack, with whom he had been riding, to come in for afternoon tea, sank back against the wall, trembling and white. He did not speak or move. Both, breathing heavily, stood glaring at each other, Herbert with coldly curling lip, Featherstone's blanched face quivering with passion he was straining to master.

The bell rang again, and it seemed to be the last straw to Bobby's nerves. He turned in the opposite direction and bellowed his valet's name; then through his teeth hissed at Herbert, "Get out! and never let me see your face again!"

"I shall send for my things this afternoon," returned Herbert with the same insolent coolness. "Will you kindly have your man put them up?" He then opened the door and disclosed Mrs. Jack's footman.

"Mr. Featherstone?" murmured the servant deferentially.

"Just inside," said Herbert; "he will speak to you himself."

On reaching the street he saw Mrs. Jack's carriage standing opposite an approximate shop, where she had entered to cover her real destination. But Herbert gave her little thought; it was necessary to secure some sort of a trap at a livery stable to keep his appointment with Mrs. Burton.

He was grateful for the "drib" from his mother that he had formerly scorned, for with it he secured a turnout, and was soon flying through Central Park behind a fleet and fine-looking animal with the woman who possessed more power over him than any other influence in life. He did not tell her of his trouble; he put it absolutely out of his mind, and did not even permit the uncertainties of where he would spend the night to throw the slightest shadow on his hour of joy.

On returning, he ordered his things to be taken to the Holland House, pawned the watch his parents had given him for fifty dollars, then dressed and hurried to Mrs. Aperton's. He arrived there just in



time to sit tête-à-tête with her before a cosy little dinner. But they had two hours after dining in which to chat, for Herbert had arranged to call for Mrs. Burton at half-after eleven.

The excitement of his situation, the close margin to which he was reduced, possessed the charm of novelty. He admired himself for managing the difficult matter as he had, and entrusted the future to this newly discovered ability.

## VII.

THE evening brought a new surprise that added to his uneasy plight. It was in the sixth figure of the cotillon, when he presented his partner with one of the oddest favors of the evening,—a beautiful green Florida lizard, enclosed in a tiny gold cage.

"What am I supposed to do with this beast?" she asked, examining it anxiously.

"Feed it on baby bottle-flies, of course!" he said, laughing.

"But where do bottle-flies keep their babies? And must they be cooked or raw? Served on a fork or in a dish?"

"You make them into a light omelet, pour carefully into an ordinary cold-cream box, and serve cold."

They laughed foolishly, and swept into the dance.

"Let us escape into the next room," she whispered after a few moments. "They will never miss us in this crowd, and I have something important to tell you." They ceased dancing, and entered the wide marble hallway, that glowed like a veritable garden with flowers and verdure, through which gleamed myriad electric lights. On every side comfortable, cosy corners and shadowy retreats lured those who wished to escape the glare and noise.

In one of these—the farthest from the more crowded sections—they installed themselves, Mrs. Burton in a nest of downy pillows, Herbert lounging near her.

"I hope what you have to tell me is something pleasant," he said, looking with adoration into the narrow eyes that regarded him so knowingly. "I am down on my luck just at present, and I do need some comfort, dear."

"It depends upon how you look at it," she replied. "I am going to London."

Herbert did not stir; he stared as though she had struck him in the face, and paled as he had that afternoon under Featherstone's fury. But instead of the former sneer his lips were now compressed with the sudden pain that closed about his heart.

"Are you in earnest?" he asked heavily.

"Perfectly. There is some property of my husband's now in litigation, and it is necessary for me to be there this month. Besides, I really prefer leaving New York just at present, so I am just as well pleased."

Herbert clinched his hands and stared at the floor. The probability of losing her was something he had not the courage to face. His infatuation was wholly absorbing,—first, because it represented something yet unattained, and, secondly, because it alone in all his life had surmounted his self-love.

"You might have told me before," he said peevishly, "and not burst it upon me like this."

"I don't see how I could possibly have let you know earlier, when I myself only knew it this morning," she returned. "As it is, you are the only being to whom I have yet confided it."

"When do you go?"

"The fifteenth. I would go earlier, but for my dinner on the twelfth."

He was silent a moment, then looked at her appealingly. "You speak of going light-heartedly," he said with quivering lips, "while to me it is like hearing my death-sentence."

"But why? You are a man of leisure and means,—come with me; I shall be quite alone."

A flash of color swept across his face and his eye brightened. He heard nothing but those words, "Come with me."

He caught her long, warm hand, from which she had drawn her glove on the pretence of arranging her bodice, and pressed it excitedly. "Shall I?" he whispered. "Do you mean that? Do you want me?"

"If you can come, yes," she returned quietly. "There is no one else."

His face darkened again; her tone recalled him to reality. How could he go without a cent to call his own?

The contact with her hand set his blood on fire; he pressed his cheek upon it in silent anguish. Mrs. Burton turned her hand gently, and allowed her fingers to caress his lips. She felt him respond with a nervous shiver. He crushed her hand, kissing it frantically.

"Let me go with you," he groaned. "I must go! I cannot live without you; not a day,—not an hour! I shall go with you, at any cost!—I shall follow you through hell!"

"Hush!" she laid her fingers upon his impetuous lips. "Someone will hear you."

"What do I care? There is nothing in the world for me without you; I could no more live without you than——"

"Well, there, calm yourself," she said, holding him back. "I don't want to be made an exhibition of here. If you can come, I shall be glad to have you. I really think I would miss my little boy before long." The look and smile with which she accompanied these words seemed to deprive him of all strength. He drew a quick breath and

bowed his head again upon her hand, losing himself in a delicious inertia of emotion.

"I shall," he murmured; "against all odds I shall go with you."

#### VIII.

Two days later Herbert was on his way to Bridgeport. His mind was made up; at any cost he meant to accompany Mrs. Burton to Europe. He had not yet determined how, but if not by fair means, then by foul. The very night of the cotillon he had sat up writing Helen Mortimer of his intended return, in a letter whose undercurrent suggested a desire to see her. To the mother, whose one absorbing thought he was, he did not write, but sent touching messages to her through Helen. He also accomplished a dramatic effect by stating in practical despair that, finding everything against his making headway in the world, he had determined to enlist as a common soldier to fight in the Philippines. This stroke he felt would have the desired effect, and it did. Helen had never ceased to think of him for one hour through all those months of his absence. Her imagination, craving a fuller, broader life, had endowed him with all the attributes of an ideal modern prince. Dreaming of his more interesting existence, she had come to rebel against her own. The simplicity with which habitude had clothed her naturally high-strung and sensitive nature could not wholly subdue a secret restlessness of spirit, and when she received her small inheritance, and realized that she was mistress of herself, there came moments of wild longing to be away.

The undertone of tenderness in Herbert's letter made her hope that she might be able to dissuade him from the rash step; it encouraged her even to dream of a possible future wherein he and she might start a new life together in the great city of New York, with her fifteen thousand dollars to help build up a fortune. This thought always started her heart beating wilder, and she would try to quiet herself by saying, "Oh, no, that would be too much; no one is as happy as that in the world."

The same afternoon of its receipt she had promised to drive with Sam in his new red-wheeled buggy, but in her impatience to break the news to the Monroes she hurried to her neighbors' on foot, telling her cousin, who, with his wife, had come to live on the farm and manage it for her, that she would probably not be back for supper.

Mr. and Mrs. Monroe were sitting in the sunny side parlor, whose windows looked out on the curving avenue with its border of fine old trees stretching their wide branches leafless and black against the clear winter sky.

Mrs. Monroe had worsted work in her lap, but her hands lay idly upon it, her kind gray eyes resting upon Sam, who stood outside watch-

ing the stableman prepare his buggy and horse, while her thoughts were far away with "Herb."

"Where is Sam going?" asked her husband, following her glance over the top of his paper, "up to Mortimers' again?"

"I guess so," replied his wife.

"It looks as though he'd cut Herb out with Helen," with a sheepish twinkle.

"Well, it isn't much to his credit if he does!" snapped his spouse. "I wrote Herbert the other day that I thought him a fool to let her forget him, especially now that she's come into that money. It would start them well together, and she certainly had her heart set upon him first."

Mr. Monroe laid down his paper and hugged his knee. "Well, I'd like to know why Sam hasn't just as much right there as anyone," he said slowly. "Herb went off; he's got such high and mighty ideas; and I don't see that he's so much more taking in his appearance and ways than Sam. Sam has the better stuff in him. Look at him studying there at the night-school every evening to make a lawyer of himself! He's laid up a sum from his own work too, and he's more fit to marry the girl."

"It's a pity Herb couldn't have taken an interest in things here," said Mrs. Monroe with a sigh. "You never gave him much encouragement, it seems to me."

"I did all I could to get him interested," returned Joseph, "and you know it. I did more than I ought to have done. Here I am strapped merely because of the expenses he's put me to. He hasn't it in him, that's the fact of the matter. For my part, I don't believe in all this college—— Why, here comes Helen herself! Sam's going to take her from here, I reckon."

His wife leaned forward to get a better view of the avenue, up which Helen was advancing briskly. If she isn't a picture!" she murmured admiringly, to which Monroe grunted assent, then hurried to open the front door.

"I have such news!" cried Helen, her face and eyes beaming. "Herb's coming home!"

"What!" Mrs. Monroe started up to greet her, dropping her balls of worsted on the floor. Mr. Monroe sat down on the edge of the horse-hair sofa and locked his hands together.

"Yes," continued Helen breathlessly, "and—and he says he's going to the Philippines."

"No!"

"Yes, that's what he's coming back for, to—to—say—good-by!" Helen, overcome by excitement rather than the confidence in what she uttered, broke into convulsive sobs as she unfolded Herbert's letter.

"Well, I declare!" murmured Mrs. Monroe, "and he never wrote to me!"

"He sends you many messages," sobbed Helen. "He seems rather hurt because he thinks you all don't care much about him."

Mr. Monroe leaned forward, his elbows on knees, and his chin in his hand, listening as Helen read out bits of the letter.

"Oh, my poor boy!" murmured the elder woman in distress. "I don't understand. I've written him four letters in the past week. Perhaps he didn't get them."

"Perhaps you didn't send what he asked for!" remarked her husband, somewhat bitterly.

Mrs. Monroe turned with indignant, tear-shining face. "Aren't you ashamed of yourself?" she demanded. "It's you and Sam that have driven him to risk his life in war!" the last word was drowned in a sob.

"He hasn't gone yet," remarked Monroe. "You'd better keep your tears till the day he goes."

Just then his wife caught sight of Sam passing by in his shining buggy. She threw open the window.

"Come in quick, Sam!" she cried excitedly, "we've got some news!"

As Sam entered he gave a start on beholding Helen, then looked inquiringly from her tearful face to his mother.

"What's the matter?" he asked. Mr. Monroe watched him curiously out of the side of his eyes.

"Herb's coming back!" said his mother, sobbing hysterically. "He'll be here to-morrow. He wrote Helen all about it."

With the look that came into Sam's face his father bowed his head. Helen glanced at him too, but he was staring ahead, his hands hanging helplessly. For scarcely a moment he stood so, then heaved his broad shoulders restlessly. "Well, what are you all crying about?" he asked. "Do you consider his coming back a—calamity? I guess I'll put the horse up again."

Helen, instinctively feeling the significance of his words, stepped towards him.

"No, Sam," she said, "I'll go with you."

Sam paused, and fingered his cuff-button attentively.

"I guess if he wrote to you—and—you were glad—or—sorry, or—anything, I guess you oughtn't to be driving about with me, Helen."

Helen bent the letter she held in a momentary embarrassment.

"Did you write back?" asked Sam, glancing at her inquiringly.

"Yes," said Helen.

He smiled in a strangely tremulous way, then went out and led his horse by the bridle back to the barn.

## IX.

HERBERT was too clever to be guilty of any unseemly precipitancy in his advances towards Helen, although the girl's attitude made it clear enough that he could have her for the asking. But there were others to be considered, and whom he knew were watching him keenly,—his parents and Sam. He had two full weeks before him, and in that time he planned to win Helen's entire confidence, besides securing himself against all suspicion in the eyes of the others. It was a trying period for him; there were endless long talks with his father, who had pointed out to him the advisability of his settling down at home to assist Sam to carry on the estate, and how he would probably before long become sole proprietor, as his brother meant to practise law in Bridgeport as soon as he could do so legitimately. He also had brotherly talks with Sam that set his teeth on edge and endless coddling from his mother.

In addition to this, the deadly monotony of the place preyed upon his over-excited state of mind, and twice in the first week he felt obliged to visit the town of Bridgeport for the excitement and diversion that had become absolutely necessary to him. To do him justice, he suffered considerable self-reproach when he permitted himself to appreciate what he was planning to do, and it was for this reason he utilized every means available of stilling thought.

It was not long before trusting and admiring Sam began to see beneath the false veneer of his brother's education, and in his generous judgment to recognize how greatly Herbert had been wronged by his too fond parents. It was owing to this persuasion that Sam guiltily withheld from their knowledge the secret of his brother's several late returns from night-time revelry in the town. With the exaggerated sense of loyalty native to a disposition both tender and comparatively unsophisticated, he deemed it best to bear the burden of his knowledge alone, and although he attempted to remonstrate with Herbert, he felt that his words lacked strength to his brother's comprehension, who only smiled and insinuated that Sam was no judge of such things.

One evening, towards the end of the second week, Herbert did not come home to supper, but he so often passed the afternoon and remained to supper with Helen that it caused little comment.

"I suppose Herb's over at Mortimers'," remarked Mrs. Monroe when the meal was over, as she set aside for him some cold custard and broiled chicken.

Sam closed his hand fiercely under the table; and Mr. Monroe, who had long been secretly criticising his younger son, pushed his chair back, seized his paper, and, looking over the top of his glasses, responded, "Well, I guess he'll get enough to eat, if he is, and there's no use putting by that stuff. You fuss over him as you would over a baby."

"Oh, hold your tongue!" replied his wife. "You would let him go on as though he had no home; but I'm his mother, and I want him to know he isn't forgotten."

"You're ruining him, that's what you're doing!" growled Joseph, feeling for his pipe as he strolled into the front room.

His wife grunted disdainfully and continued to arrange a dainty little supper for her pet on the sideboard. She then asked Sam to get the checker-board and play a game with her.

He obeyed with quiet good-nature that gave no evidence of the disappointment her request caused him. He had looked forward to a quiet stroll in the twilight, where he could think out his secret anxiety about Herbert's real attitude towards Helen.

"Sam," said his mother softly in the midst of their game, with a keen glance over her spectacles, "your father's been hintin' that our boy isn't going quite right. What do you think?"

Sam did not reply; he seemed puzzled over his next move.

"You've got something on your mind, Sam, I know it," said his mother; "now, you've just got to tell me."

"It's not for me to tell you,"—he made his move,—“ask the boy himself.”

"I have asked him, many's the time, and he only laughs and kisses me; but I feel something is wrong, and you don't want to hide it from me, because it will only make things more fretting in the end."

"I have nothing to tell you more than you can see for yourself."

"Do you think he's been drinking?"

"I know he has," replied Sam with a determined look.

His mother jerked back in her chair. "How do you know it?" she demanded petulantly.

"Because I've seen it."

"Well, I haven't and your father hasn't, and it's very strange you should be the only one."

"You asked me," he returned quietly.

"Yes, because I thought you'd be just to the boy."

Sam was silent.

"I might have known what you'd say. You've always been a bit jealous of the lad."

"It's your move, mother."

Mrs. Monroe jerked a checker from one square to another heedlessly. "Poor boy, he's pecked at and slandered by the lot of you! It's good he's got a mother who can understand him and friends who like him."

Her son looked at her. "Did you mean to do that?" he asked. "I'll jump you."

She drew the checker back and made another move.

"Who's that prowling down there in the orchard?" said Mr. Monroe from where he sat on the steps out of earshot.

Sam leaned over and peered through the window towards the orchard, which lay to the right, and beheld a man moving unsteadily among the trees. Although he could not discern him, he felt sure it was Herbert. He arose hurriedly, fearing his father might also make the discovery.

"I'll go and see," he said; "it may be someone after the chickens." He started off on a run.

On arriving he found Herbert in a sad state of intoxication, and little prone to accept any interference, being in the maudlin condition which brooks no control.

"You'd better let me get you to your room," said Sam coldly. "Father saw someone coming through here, and you don't want him to find you like this, or there'll be a row."

"Oh, let me alone, will you!" growled Herbert thickly. "What's the matter with me? I'm all right." His face was pale, and with long, drawn lines about the mouth. "I'm going up there to see mother."

"No, you're not, Herbert," Sam said with deep feeling; "you'll be sorry if you do, I tell you."

"Well, I don't want any of your d——d advice or interference, so go on about your business!" returned his brother.

"It'll only bring trouble if you go up."

"Well, all right; that's my affair. I'm as sober as you are." With that he bumped blindly into a tree that stood in front of him and knocked off his hat.

As he stooped to get it he almost fell, and Sam caught him by the arm. "See here," said the latter with a sudden force, "I'm not going to let you go up yonder and fret the old people, so you've just got to come with me."

Herbert jerked his arm away and turned fiercely upon him. "What the devil do you mean?" he demanded. "Do you think I'm going to let you bully me? Take that and learn not to interfere. He lurched forward and struck Sam, who was unprepared, in the face.

Sam paled, and his eyes shone fiercely.

"I'll not give you that back," he said with quiet strength, "because you're not in your right senses; but to-morrow I'll thrash you for it and—something else you did to injure me."

Herbert laughed insultingly. "You booby," he said, "I'd like to see you thrash me. Come on, let's have it now!" He stepped back and doubled his fists, ready for the attack. Sam made a quick movement and brought into play the muscles he had used for eight years on the farm. He caught Herbert's hands and pinioned them back of



him with irresistible strength. "Come," he said, "I'm tired of this nonsense."

Herbert was savage; he struggled feebly, but his efforts were absolutely impotent in the iron grasp of his brother.

Mr. Monroe, sitting on the porch, leaned over between his wide-spread legs and peered fixedly towards the orchard.

"I guess I'll go over," he said, rising and starting down the steps.

"Why? what's the trouble?" called his wife, who was still sitting back of the checker-board.

"Oh, nothing." He started slowly across the lawn, but quickened when a short distance from the house.

He reached his two struggling sons and came to a stand-still, with legs planted far apart and hands thrust in his pockets. "Well!" he ejaculated, slowly and pathetically, "if this isn't a pretty sight!"

Drinking, to Mr. Monroe, was the most deadly of the cardinal sins. He was an iron-clad prohibitionist, never having slaked his parched throat, even on the hottest day, with anything more "heady" than new, home-made cider. "If this isn't a sight!" he repeated in a sadder tone, nodding his head.

"I'll teach this booby!" muttered Herbert with impotent rage, that was farcical under the control of Sam.

"Let him go, Sammy," said his father without moving, and Sam relaxed his hold. Herbert flew at him, panting from exhaustion.

"You scoundrel!" he cried thickly, with hatred in his eyes, "I'll pay you for this yet."

"Ain't you ashamed of yourself?" said his father, without changing his position.

"I'll make that cur sweat for his insolent interference!" said Herbert, making an effort to regain his feet.

"You, whom I have done so much for!" continued his father in the same tone.

"Oh, to the devil with what you've done! You are always harping on that. I wish to Heaven I hadn't let you spend a cent on me."

Mr. Monroe's face became livid. He pressed his lips so tightly that his beard stood out horizontally under his nose.

"Take him away from here," he said in a low, stern voice; "we don't want his mother to see him like this; it wouldn't do."

"He'll not touch me!" cried Herbert, making a desperate effort to rise; "if he lays a hand on me, I'll——"

His father drew his hands from his pockets with a deliberate air. "We'll see," he said. "Lend me a hand, Sam?"

Herbert looked at his face and became suddenly calm.

"Here, don't try any of that," he said, "or there may be trouble. Let me alone, and I'll walk."

"Well, walk!" said his father; whereupon Herbert, scrambling to his feet, slouched ahead of them, muttering vengeance on Sam.

His father and brother did not open their lips until they saw him into his room, nor did they discuss the subject afterwards, but separated immediately. Mr. Monroe walked slowly into the gloom of gathering dusk, his head hanging low, his hands in his pockets, while Sam returned to finish the game with his mother.

"Well, did you get the man out?" she asked, roused by his approach from anxious thoughts.

"Yes," replied Sam uncompromisingly.

"And he didn't get anything?"

"Nothing. It's your move," said her son.

## X.

THE next day they saw nothing of Herbert, who even failed to appear at the mid-day dinner. Only Sam knew where he had gone to breakfast, for he had seen him, early in the morning, crossing rapidly over the fields that lay between their place and the Mortimers'. The sight had hurt him more cruelly than he dared to acknowledge to himself. As he watched his brother's slight, well-knit form moving on so confidently towards the girl he himself loved so deeply, a hideous emotion made him feel faint for an instant. It seemed to him such a degradation to have Herbert approach her, with his selfish, unscrupulous nature; it appeared to embody some menace to her. A heavy depression settled upon his mind that he was unable to throw off.

At dinner Mrs. Monroe talked continually of Herbert, until Sam felt on the verge of an outburst. The knowledge of his brother's unworthiness of the girl he was so surely winning ate into his heart; and yet there was nothing to do. Any effort of his to save her would only be misunderstood, he could but stand by silently and watch.

"Herb fairly lives at Mortimers' now," continued his mother when the ordeal of a dinner for which he had no appetite was at last over, "I don't see much of him." Mr. Monroe stirred his coffee; Sam stared at the cloth.

"I guess there will something develop out of this before long, don't you think so, Joe?"

"I've not thought about it."

"Well, I think you might show a little interest in your son!" complained Mrs. Monroe. "It would be a mighty fine thing if he were to marry Helen."

Sam pushed back his chair and rose. His father glanced at him, then at his untouched dessert, but said nothing until Sam left the room, then he also arose. "I guess you'd better keep the talk about Herb and Helen for any time except at table," he said irritably.

His wife looked up in astonishment. "What is the matter with you, anyway?" she demanded, as clearly as the replete condition of her mouth would permit. "You've been acting most queerly this whole day!"

"Well, if you're blind, I'm not!" returned her husband, pausing at the door to look back. "And I tell you you're not to talk any more about Herbert and Helen Mortimer before Sam, and I want you to remember it! With that he left the room, lips compressed, and shaggy brows drawn down angrily.

That night, when they were gathered as usual in the big front room, Joseph absorbed in his paper and pipe, Sam playing the customary game of checkers with which he sought to amuse his mother before retiring to study, they were startled by the excited entrance of John Allen, Helen's cousin.

He came with the astounding news that Helen had eloped with Herbert that afternoon, and he produced as proof to their bewildered eyes a letter written by the girl herself confirming what he said. The letter had been penned in the station at Bridgeport, in a style more Herbert's than Helen's, and stated that they had already been married civilly, but gave no address and no information as to where she was going.

Sam said nothing, although his face blanched, and while the others were absorbed in discussing the affair, he arose quietly and went out into the clear, cold night. He walked quickly for a few yards down the avenue, then stopped abruptly and looked about him. The scene appeared strangely unfamiliar. He felt a peculiar sense of emptiness stretching from the direction of the Mortimers' across the darkness to his heart. He looked up and saw a young moon and stars, and the tall, still pine-trees on the hill standing black against a translucent sky, and it all seemed hideous and unreal to him.

He drew a deep breath, and with head bowed strode on into the darkness.

## XI.

HELEN had been married several months. For three successive and blissful weeks Herbert had been with her constantly, helping to furnish their tiny apartment in Hooper Street, Brooklyn. He had evinced great interest and care in fitting up the little rooms comfortably and tastefully for her; he had spent hours in shops helping her to choose, and making suggestions that were always for her comfort and independent of his. For those three weeks she knew the wonderful and rare blessing of perfect happiness.

Then Herbert departed, telling her it was necessary to absent himself for a little while in order to secure a very lucrative position of which he had already spoken to her, and that to obtain it he would be

obliged to keep his marriage secret for a short time. He implored her to trust him, and explained that it was a common thing for young men to leave their wives for a week or two to better their conditions; it was only by such self-sacrifice they could hope to succeed. He also warned her against having her address known for a short time, even by her family, lest it should get abroad that she was his wife, and as the people with whom he was negotiating desired a single man, he feared his chances would be jeopardized should the truth get out. He made it clear that such deceptions were absolutely necessary if one wished to succeed, and she, in her innocence of the world and trusting love, accepted it with perfect confidence.

To her Herbert was faultless; there was no room in her heart for doubt; she grieved that he was obliged to leave their little home so soon, even for a short time, and remembering how bravely he had spoken of his going as a cruel but necessary self-sacrifice, she honored him for it.

Each day she looked for a letter, and when it did not come, consoled herself with the thought that he dared not write for fear of being detected. A week passed, and her heart knew no misgiving. The week stretched into a month, the month into others,—hot summer months, passed partly in illness. She awoke one day in September to find that there were only three hundred dollars remaining of the five hundred Herbert had left her. Where he had placed the remaining fourteen thousand she had not thought to ask. Even in the cruel hour of her awakening she could not sully her beautiful memory with the stain of a hideous crime. She clung to it, like a child to a headless doll, unwilling to believe that there was only sawdust where she had so trustingly pictured a loving heart.

But, like a slowly rising tide, the truth grew up between her and her childhood, teaching her that agony of loneliness which comes when one's dearest trust has been betrayed, and one's child-nature shocked to cynical maturity by a sudden revelation of sin and treachery.

The truth was revealed one day as she was clearing out her closet for the winter, laying fresh papers on the shelves and packing her summer things. As she smoothed out one newspaper from among those she had been saving for months, her eyes were attracted, as though by some magnetic force, to the name "Herbert S. Monroe," printed clearly among the passengers sailing that day, the fourteenth of March, on the Germanic. She stared at it, unable to move. The many months of her waiting returned to her mind mockingly; she remembered all she had suffered, and her spirit suddenly awoke to rebellious anger, such as she had never known before.

Beneath his name was that of one John Maxwell, and above it Mrs.

Tinsley Burton. All three seemed photographed upon her mind; for days she could not be rid of them.

She had written in sheer desperation, now and again, to the people at home, never giving her address or hinting by the slightest word that her life was not happy. But now these letters were more difficult to write. The fact that she had been so cruelly duped made her ashamed to confide the truth. A new independence of spirit grew out of her sorrow, a more mature view of things. To return to the old life was impossible; she had tasted the intoxicating sweetness that lies secreted in life, and she had drunk deep of its bitterness. Her nature had been spurred to full sensuousness; it craved action and excitement to fill the void.

Her eyes had been opened considerably during these three months, and, although still an innocent woman, she had begun to take a broader view of life. She soon realized it would be necessary to do something for her support against the time when the little money she had should be exhausted. Miss Elison, an elderly spinster she had taken to board with her on her neighbor's recommendation, advised Helen to go on the stage. The proposition was a shock to inherited prejudices; she rejected it with scorn.

"Well, I can't see what else you can do," remarked her friend, who made a precarious living with music lessons and playing the church organ on Sundays. "You can't be a teacher without a diploma from some school, and you are unable to teach music, painting, or anything."

"I can sew," Helen said wearily.

"Sew! Why, my dear child, you couldn't earn bread and butter by sewing."

"Well, I could learn typewriting." Helen paced the room nervously. "If only you would come to New York City with me, I'd find something to do!"

"Oh, everyone thinks that!" returned the other; "but New York proper is overrun with typewriters, and people seeking employment in every conceivable way, who can't keep body and soul together. Look at the daily papers,—columns upon columns of women who offer their services for almost nothing."

"There would be no use, then, to advertise?"

"Not the least bit. Besides, what would you advertise as?"

"I—could be a nursery governess."

"It would be a dog's life. But if you want that, look in the Sunday paper; you will be just as likely to find something that way as by advertising, and save your money. But it is a menial position; you would hate it. If I had your looks and—presence, I'd most certainly go to see some theatrical manager and offer my services. I have

a friend who has a position in 'The Lost Chord' just through her looks and nothing else. She gets thirty dollars a week, and has scarcely anything to do."

"Oh, no; I couldn't endure that," said Helen, who had been to the theatre but once, and then much to her aunt's distress, for she considered the stage a sure way to perdition. "To stand up and be stared at as a means of living,—it must be awful!"

"Well, I'd rather stand up and be stared at an hour or so, for thirty dollars a week, than I would to slave my life out all day long, merely to sleep at night under a roof and have three miserable meals. Actresses have some excitement, some pleasure in living, while we plod through the days for—I don't know what! nothing but the privilege of breathing and eating and sleeping: a cat has that!"

"Oh, I know. But actresses are so bad."

"How are they bad? Because they take a little enjoyment out of life? What do they do that is bad?"

"Oh, I don't know; but I have always heard so."

Miss Alison laughed. "Well, don't you believe it," she said; "they are not as bad as they're painted. We all take life too seriously, that is the truth. I wish I had seen things as clearly when I was younger, I wouldn't be where I am now. Where do these narrow principles lead you to, anyway?—to a disappointed old age, that's all. Look at the best society. Do you ever hear of worse scandals on the stage than you do in society? And in society most of the wickedness is kept quiet, while everything is open in an actress's life." Miss Alison compressed her colorless lips and slowly shook her head. "No, don't preach exaggerated proprieties to me; they have spoiled many a life, as they have mine. If I had ever married and had a daughter, I would teach her merely how to take care of herself, not how to avoid happiness by a false understanding of right and wrong."

"Happiness may be had without illegitimate excitement," said Helen pensively. "It wouldn't make me happy to spend my time in a whirl of gayety and dissipation."

"Would it make you happy to sit ten hours on a piano stool trying to drum simple rules into stupid children, eat a lonely dinner, and creep into bed too tired in body and soul even to read for an hour's recreation? Oh, no,—for me, give me the whirl of gayety and dissipation, as long as it does not pass the line of decency."

Helen stood by the window looking into the past,—into those long weeks of anguish that now blotted out all memory of the three first weeks with their incomparable but false joy.

She seemed to herself like a being wholly apart from the young and trusting girl who had come there as a happy bride; she was older, wiser, and more cold. Yet the philosophy of the elder woman did not

ring true to her understanding. Though grief had to some extent hardened her nature and shattered some ideals, it had not embittered her. She had not yet felt the galling grind of real poverty, nor had the sweet freshness and purity of her home influence been tainted by contact with sordid life or the fever of unscrupulous ambition. Her heart, although so incurably wounded, still trusted the future,—not with the old, tender anticipation, but with an eagerness for action, an impatience to lift herself out of the darkness and distrust that had settled upon her. Never before had she had so great a longing to accomplish something, to rise defiantly above the treachery that had so nearly crushed her. In place of the wild grief with which she had slowly realized the truth of her situation, she knew a spirited self-reliance, and on this she determined to rise.

"If you did have that sort of life you would probably not like it," she said quietly. "You believe it would make you happy because you are told it is happiness. Women weren't intended for that sort of thing; we need love and—to be cherished and taken care of."

"Oh, yes; that's all very well," returned the spinster; "but if that is not available, then give me excitement in preference to drudgery."

If that is not available! The words hurt her hearer; they awoke a secret rebellion against her own philosophy that had long been brewing in Helen's mind, and made her half-distrustful of herself. This was one of the reasons why she so craved employment; she was afraid of herself.

The following Sunday she wrote in answer to several advertisements for nursery governesses, but her letters were ignored. She was advised by her friend to answer one in person. It was a widower with two little girls, who wished a young lady of refinement to look after them.

She found a very pompous Jew, whose most salient characteristics were wealth and avoirdupois.

Nevertheless, she permitted herself to be engaged, under the name Helen Morton, which she determined to adopt, and went to live in a great mansion on Lexington Avenue with two little, ugly, dark girls under her charge. She was given private apartments with them, and was treated with sufficient dignity by all but the children, who were spoiled and exacting. To her high-strung spirit the feeling of dependence was hard to bear, and there were no congenial associations and no prospect of anything better.

Yet she was grateful to have her time occupied, even by the fretting and ceaseless demands of the two unlovable girls, who seemed to thoroughly understand they could exact the services from her for which their father paid.

At first she saw little of her employer, but later it was arranged that she and the children should dine with him, except on occasions when he had company. This she did not relish, for personally the man was repulsive to her, and his growing attentiveness soon caused her keen discomfort.

One Saturday evening at dinner he asked her if she would like to go to the theatre, and upon her declining somewhat coolly he said persistently: "Why not? You don't have much fun. I'd like to see you enjoy yourself. You're not the sort of girl that ought to be mewed up all the time in a nursery."

"I am perfectly satisfied to be so," returned Helen with dignity.

When the children had been put to bed, their father sent for Helen, saying he wished to have a little talk with her. She descended to his study, wondering what the summons could mean, and although not consciously anticipating the truth, she instinctively shrank from the interview.

Mr. Goldstein was standing before the fire, a large cigar in his mouth, his hands back of him. As Helen entered he stepped forward and closed the door behind her.

"Sit down, my dear, sit down," he said cordially, without removing the cigar, then drew a chair close to her. "You weren't offended at me for asking you to go to the theatre, were you?"

"No, I was not offended."

He eyed her admiringly, then squirmed about and chewed his cigar. "You see, I hate to know you don't get out more. You're young, you ought to have more fun. I could give you a mighty good time, and I'm willing to do it,—I'd like to do it."

Helen sat up. "Thanks," she said, "but I am not here to have a good time; I am here to earn my living, and I desire nothing more."

Her employer waved his bejewelled hand contemptuously. "Oh, that's all very well!" he said. "But your living's all right; don't you worry. I recognize you're doin' your duty, and I want to see you enjoy yourself. If you'd only not—eh—give me the cold shoulder, I'd show you a little life. You're too good-looking to be shut up——"

Helen arose. "Is this all you wished to say?" she asked coldly, fixing her angry gray eyes upon him.

Mr. Goldstein stared at her with open mouth and without rising, then jumped to his feet in a flurry. "Now, look here; don't take on like that," he coaxed. "I'm only meaning to be friendly. I like you,—I like you very much." As he spoke he leaned forward and took her hand. Helen pulled it away angrily, her face flushing.

"You are most insulting!" she exclaimed, and started to the door. On arriving there, she turned and faced him where he stood in a posture of silly amazement. Her face was now colorless, her breath



coming quickly. "My month will be up on Monday," she said; "I shall leave you then!"

When she reached her room she locked the door and threw herself into a chair. She was trembling in every fibre, but did not weep. The days for weeping were past. She stared, dry-eyed and miserable, into the dark, wondering what she would do, where she would go in that great city, where she knew no one.

Back of her misery came memories of the peaceful life at Stratford, but even in her distress she shrank from the thought of returning and laying bare to the inquisitive eyes there the wound in her heart. The fact that the man she had trusted and loved above all others had betrayed and robbed her was a secret she could not bear to confide to another. She meant to wait until she could face Herbert himself, although she had little hope that he would ever cross her path again. Indeed, whether she should ever see him again or not was a matter of indifference. The desire for vengeance had no place in her feeling towards him; the blow had been too deadly to all her love; she only longed to forget.

## XII.

THE next morning she sent out early, before the children waked, for the Sunday paper, and searched the want columns. There were no governesses advertised for save where languages were required. After much searching she cut out one that asked for a young lady of refinement and education to act as travelling-companion to a young married woman. The applicant was requested to call that day between two and three. This fact seemed to make it especially intended for her. The thought of travelling was attractive. She became more hopeful, and although feigning illness to avoid meeting Mr. Goldstein at luncheon, she did not brood over the occurrence of the evening before, but dreamed of the possibilities this new venture might hold in store for her.

At precisely three o'clock she walked up the broad steps of the house on Forty-fifth Street to which the advertisement directed her. She was ushered into an artistically arranged hallway, and thence into a tiny reception-room hung with handsome tapestries, from which she could see a wide carved-oak staircase and hall, and a handsome dining-room beyond, richly illumined through stained-glass windows.

Another young woman was sitting near her of unprepossessing appearance and wearing spectacles, waiting, apparently, on the same errand as she.

Helen looked about her at the tasteful arrangement of the room,—the tall old silver vase that stood on the table filled with American Beauty roses, the rare bits of bric-a-brac, and the paintings.

Near her, between two carved-wood columns that formed part of

the entrance to the hall, hung a handsomely framed photograph of a woman. It caught her eye, and she arose to look at it. The face was one of extreme beauty, but of a decidedly unusual type. The high cheek-bones and narrow, light eyes possessed a charm that cannot be expressed in words. The low, square forehead and beautiful hair and brows softened a rather sensual mouth and strongly moulded chin. As she looked upon it Helen wondered if this could be the woman who had advertised for a companion. It seemed incompatible with the strong self-reliance in the pictured face. She did not feel drawn to her, and almost dreaded the interview that was to bring them together.

As she stood there, the dining-room door opened and a young, shabbily dressed woman came out, followed by a maid who opened the front door for her, then asked the individual with spectacles to follow her. Helen was alone; she began to feel afraid, and her eyes returned again and again to the photograph, as though under some fascination that she could not resist. The more she regarded it, the stronger appeared to become its power, and the more she dreaded meeting the original.

Her knees trembled when, a few moments later, she rose to the maid's whispered, "Mrs. Manning will see you now, Miss."

As she entered the room every trace of fear left her. There was no one visible save one young woman sitting at the head of a handsome mahogany dinner-table, on which was a silver tray, tea-things, and a scattered pile of letters. Helen looked first at her and saw, instead of the subtle face of the photograph, one of the most lovely women she had ever beheld. The face was perfect in proportion, the eyes dark, and soft with a sort of wistful introspection that gave them the appearance of being blue, and invited trust and confidence immediately. Above the beautifully marked, wide brow a mass of soft chestnut hair grew low and was caught in a prettily arranged knot at the back. She was dressed in a simply made gown of black peau-de-soie, and her hair had the slightly ruffled look of one not constantly conscious of her appearance.

On beholding Helen her face brightened wonderfully; she leaned forward and touched a chair near her, as she said in a melodious English voice, "Will you sit here, please?" Then, as Helen took the chair, she added with a smile, "I know you will forgive my not getting up. I have just been sorting an accumulation of mail. Sunday is my great letter-writing day," and she touched a pile of loose letters in her lap.

"Did you get all those in one week?" asked Helen, feeling at once at her ease in the glow of this genially sweet personality.

"One week! They all came to me yesterday. I have another pile in my library upstairs. You see, I like to answer all my personal

letters myself; it seems more gracious. I know I should hate to receive a typewritten reply to a letter I had penned on an impulse of friendliness or interest; shouldn't you?"

"Yes, indeed," said Helen, somewhat puzzled to understand why she should have so many letters, and why any should be replied to by another.

"But you have not come to talk about my letters," said Mrs. Manning with a little, rippling laugh. "Is it—about the advertisement?" She touched her hair softly, and looked up under her lashes with an appealing glance that expressed a little sensitive timidity lest she might be making a mistake.

"Yes," said Helen; "I don't know what the requirements may be, and I haven't had any experience, but I thought——"

"Oh, no experience is necessary," replied Mrs. Manning, laughing again, this time somewhat girlishly, and leaning one elbow on the table, her chin in her hand, she regarded Helen with genuine interest. "What I am looking for is someone congenial to travel with me. We go on tour in two weeks, so, of course, I shall be parted from Mr. Manning for several months, and there is no one the least bit interesting to me in my company. I thought it would be a good plan to advertise, though I scarcely hoped I would be fortunate enough to find—someone."

Helen was too dumfounded to make any reply, other than an unintelligible sound. All this was incomprehensible to her. She knew so little about the theatre and stage life that she did not for an instant connect what she heard with it.

Mrs. Manning quickly discerned the bewilderment in her face. "Oh, I forgot my advertisement did not tell you who I am," she said; "I am Mrs. J. H. Manning,—better known as Constance Belmont."

Helen had, of course, heard the name since coming to New York, and she now grasped the situation with a peculiar commingling of disappointment and astonishment.

The lovely, sensitive face before her reflected her surprise.

"Are you not interested in the stage?" she asked, with a little, tolerant smile.

"Oh, yes," returned Helen quickly; "I mean—I know nothing about it. But if you are an—if you belong to it—it must be very different from what I have always supposed."

"My dear, outsiders have not the slightest idea of what theatrical life—I mean the better class—is really like. They all judge it from story-books, and by what it used to be a hundred years ago. You interest me; I think we would get on famously if we could come to some understanding."

In a few moments Helen found herself telling this woman, who

had been an absolute stranger to her an hour before, all her history; confiding even her feelings and the shameful story of her desertion, which she had never before intrusted beyond her own heart. She did not reveal her husband's name, through a delicacy of feeling that Mrs. Manning did not attempt to intrude upon by even a look of inquiry. That name was sacred to the past, and Helen had buried it with the first sweet dream of her awakening womanhood. To intrust to one she felt could understand and sympathize all she had kept so long secret was a great relief to the girl, and moved her so deeply that at one time she almost broke down, and the tears arose uncontrollably to her eyes.

Constance Belmont's eyes immediately responded, and the two sat looking at each other for a moment through their tears. She leaned over and took Helen's hand.

"You poor child," she said with infinite feeling, "you certainly have had a sad time; but don't cry—don't break your heart over it. It is awful to have had it all come when you are so young, but perhaps it is better. You will never know such suffering again. You are prepared now to meet the world, and so few of us ever are at your age. Many of us trust and trust and hope and hope until—well, until we don't see anything to hope for. It is almost better to have your ideals shattered when you believe in them, than to have them fade out of your belief."

"But you—you can't be any older than I am," said Helen, drying her eyes for the fifth time.

"Oh, yes, several years possibly," returned the other; "but I am much older in experience. Although I have always been well guarded from contact with the rougher side of life, I have known the world since I was sixteen. I have been obliged to study humanity; then I have been so closely associated with so many different types. I have heard their histories and unconsciously have noted their lives. All this broadens one; it teaches one how to value things and how to judge people. It also teaches how much there is in life that is artificial, and how much real."

Helen was startled at this moment by a man's laugh, and for the first time became aware of two men sitting back of them on a small loggia that opened off the dining-room through glass doors that were closed.

"That is only Mr. Manning and the author of his new play, Mr. Haughtly," said Mrs. Manning, noticing Helen's consternation; "they could not possibly have heard what we have been saying."

A little later Manning and his companion entered and were presented to Helen, who was persuaded to remain longer by Mrs. Manning, who saw that she was in an overstrung, nervous mood.

Manning, like his wife, was the darling of the public; not only

for his ability as an actor, which was decidedly uncommon for a man of scarcely thirty, but for his personal attractiveness.

Tall and athletic of build, with a finely poised head and strong, classical features, he seemed to have been put together expressly for the stage. His massive chin and strongly chiselled lips showed to even better advantage behind the footlights than in a drawing-room, as did also the peculiar grace of movement for which he was noted. About him there was more of the stamp of his profession than there was about his wife. He had the quiet self-possession of an embryo Irving; while she gave the impression rather of a dreamer than an actor, a woman of infinite sensibilities, which was the secret of her wonderful popularity and winning portrayal of characters.

"Fate has sent Miss Morton to me, Jack!" she exclaimed with the naïve impulsiveness of a nature both warm and untrammelled by stupid conventionalities. "She has agreed to go on tour with me."

"Ah, I am delighted," murmured Mr. Manning with the cautious reserve of a man of the world, who would like to know more before expressing himself too enthusiastically. "It will be a great comfort to Mrs. Manning to have you, Miss Morton."

"I really feel we shall be good friends," murmured his wife, with one of those half-tender, half-questioning smiles thrown from beneath her lashes towards Helen. "And you will find it amusing if you have never crossed the States."

"There is nothing I like so much as travelling," returned Helen with sincerity. "And just think, I have never been farther away from home than Bridgeport, since I was four years old, when I was taken to visit my aunt, Mrs. Dupre, in Philadelphia."

"Mrs. Alphonse Dupre?" asked Mr. Manning with interest.

"Yes, she was my mother's sister," returned Helen. "We spent two years with her there after my father's death."

"I know her quite well," said Manning. "Dupre is one of my best friends."

"How funny," murmured his wife. "You see, it was a good inspiration, after all, that made me put in that advertisement, Jack."

"I shall come after this to consult with your oracle, Mrs. Manning, when I am puzzled about what to do," remarked Mr. Haughtly, who had been watching the color rising and fading in the girl's delicately chiselled face. "Your impulse certainly served you well this time."

Helen turned towards him laughingly. "How do you know?" she asked. "I might be the veriest—rogue!"

Their eyes met and exchanged mutual interest. "If you are," he said, "then I shall consider myself unworthy to longer depict human nature, since I can be so grossly deceived."

Constance Belmont smiled upon him. "Bravo, Vincent!" she exclaimed softly, "that was worthy of a Talleyrand."

When Helen took her departure Mrs. Manning accompanied her to the front door.

"We have only just moved in here," she remarked, glancing about the hall that seemed to Helen to be in perfect order, "and we are not yet half settled."

They paused near the door, and Helen's eyes fell again on the photograph that had so interested her. "Do you know," she said, smiling now at her groundless fears, "when I first came in I thought that was you."

"I! Why, it doesn't look a bit like me!"

"I know; but I hadn't seen you before, you know, and I imagined that it might be a photograph of the person I was to see."

"That is the beautiful Mrs. Tinsley Burton, a leader of the Smart Set here. You have probably heard of her."

"No—and yet the name does seem rather familiar," returned Helen thoughtfully, and trying to recall where she had heard it before.

"Oh, her name has been in the papers constantly; if you read the New York society news, you could not miss seeing it."

Helen laughed. "But I never read it," she said.

"Neither do I; but I have been entertained by her several times, and hear of all she has been doing. This is her house. She has gone to Europe for two years, and rented it to us just as it was."

"Oh," remarked Helen, as she laid her hand on the door-knob that Herbert had so often touched even in those days while she loved and trusted him in the little apartment in Brooklyn, "it is certainly beautiful."

An unaccountable depression was beginning to settle upon her. She attributed it to the fact that she was obliged to leave this new friend and return to the hated abode on Lexington Avenue.

"You must come in to see me to-morrow sometime," said Mrs. Manning as they parted; "come about four, if you have nothing to do, and dine with me; then we can go over to the theatre together. You have never been behind the scenes, have you?"

"No, I should love to go!" said Helen, flushing slightly with pleasure at the thought.

When Mrs. Manning returned to the dining-room her husband made her a sweeping court bow. "Permit me to apologize for criticising your advertising venture," he said with dramatic humility.

"Isn't she lovely!" exclaimed Constance, looking from one to the other with a beaming smile as she took her place again at the head of the table, pulling the arm-chair close in, with a sort of girlish ardor.

"She is beautiful!" said Haughtly enthusiastically.

"Oh Vincent, control yourself, my boy; don't let your susceptible heart run away with you, as usual!" cried Manning as he lolled back, with hands locked behind his head, and looked smilingly at the playwright.

"And she is so refined," said his wife.

"What a Christina she would make in my new play!" ejaculated Haughtly.

Manning was now thoughtfully blowing smoke towards the ceiling. "What a fine Cecelia she would be for me in place of Miss Watson!" he remarked.

"That's right, both of you immediately plan to take her from me!" complained Constance half laughingly. "Well, you just can't have her. I found her, and she's mine!"

The men laughed. "She is too tall for Cecelia, Jack," said Haughtly, still clinging to his own idea, "but she would make a most perfect Christina."

"Oh, a few inches more or less wouldn't matter," returned the other quite as seriously; "stage characters can grow, you know, if they wish to."

"You might just as well both stop calculating upon her," said his wife with genuine seriousness, "for you shall not have her!"

Manning stood up and stretched his arms. "Well, I'll see to it that Vincent does not get her," he said, smiling. "If it is to be either of us, I'm the man!"

His wife looked at him with raised brows. "Well, I call that jolly impudent!" she observed scathingly. "Jack, your vanity is something enormous!"

"It will engulf him soon," said Vincent, who had also risen, "and we shall hear of the great Manning no more."

"Where are you going?" asked Mrs. Manning as her husband bent to kiss her.

"I am going to beard the wolf in his den," he replied playfully. "Harding is having a conference with Herman in an effort to do me out of my lease of the theatre. Belonging to the great tribe of wanderers, he does not observe the Sabbath, and while the city prays, he and the Trust conspire against an innocent Christian!"

"You mean they haven't given up the fight yet?"

"Not they! They are tenacious. Do you know that the Trust hired men to have everyone of my new posters destroyed? There is not one left on any wall in the city or Harlem."

"But how can they break your lease? I thought it was secure?"

"So did I. But they have bribed someone in my employ to repeat something I said about wanting to get out on the fifteenth as verbal evidence that I broke the lease."

"What piffle!" cried Constance indignantly. "Oh, I wish some-

one with money would crush this Trust! It is making a mere trade of dramatic art."

"Wait till we find a few more independent spirits like our Jack here," said Haughtly. "The Trust won't have a leg to stand on! But they're all afraid to lose the almighty dollar, that's where the trouble is. Look at the time the whole country should have mourned for McKinley; there wasn't another theatre but Jack's closed on Broadway, even the very night of the crime!"

"Well, there are many disadvantages in being one's own manager," said Manning quietly, "but there are also some advantages, and one is that a man is not forced to sacrifice not only art, but individual principles to the avariciousness of others. They have done everything under the sun to overthrow me, even to the meanness of duplicating my play; but, thank Heaven! the American people still have their independence. Why, even the critics are losing power over the public because they hold remuneration higher than justice. Look how they tried to down me! But they failed; the whole lot put together failed!"

"Yes, and it is the grandest tribute the public has ever paid art," said Haughtly feelingly. "It gives one an incentive to do good work."

"Jack, don't get into trouble with Herman," pleaded Constance, who followed them into the hall with an ornament taken from the dining-room to be placed, as she thought, with better effect on a table in the hall. "You know he will do anything he can to injure you."

"No, dear; don't worry," returned Manning; "there is nothing he can do. I shall meet him at his own game."

### XIII.

ON Monday Helen said good-by to the Goldstein household forever, and, after installing herself in a small boarding-house room on Thirty-first Street, she went to Mrs. Manning's, as she had been invited to do. She was asked to go straight up to the front bedroom, where she found Constance, with the help of her maid, hurriedly getting into a walking-suit.

"I am so glad you came," she said, smiling at her over her shoulder. "I've had so many people here this afternoon that I have scarcely time to dine and run to the theatre. Eugenie, is that right?" she added to the maid. "Should this thing hook crookedly like that?"

As Eugenie arranged the matter, Constance pinned her hat on nobbily, with a backward tilt of her head and a glance in the mirror, then turned to the door.

"Have you dined?" she asked, pressing Helen's hand, and added, as Helen replied that she had, "Well, you won't mind sitting with me while I have a bit, will you? I'm afraid I am going to be jolly late!"

Her dinner was laid at one end of the big dining-table. It was



simple, but served most attractively on delicate china by a noiseless maid.

"Mr. Manning dined at the club to-night," she continued, "and I always forget everything about dinner if he is not here. I really believe if it were not for the maids I would go without. I hope you don't mind being hurried?" she added as she started for the front door. "You know it would be rather serious if the star should be late!"

She sped down the brown-stone steps like a deer, and ran to the corner for a car that was then in sight. Helen followed, breathless. It was all so different to the life of a star as Miss Elison had described it to her. There was no extravagant dressing, no paint, no jewels, no carriage; only a pure-minded, simply dressed, beautiful young woman, as conscientious in fulfilling the duty she had undertaken as any governess might be, and too much in love with her art to care about the petty dissipations of society.

On leaving the car they walked half a block, and arriving at a dark little door set in under the steps of an adjoining house, they pushed it open and passed through two bare, dingy rooms furnished with a bench, a table, and two colored posters of Mrs. Manning.

The star's room was on the right, three steps down. Although a small room like the others, it had been draped by some of her many friends in light-blue cheese-cloth. One entire wall was covered with the congratulatory telegrams received on her opening night, the other with souvenirs of tributes sent her by admiring audiences. Her maid, who generally accompanied her, but had been sent on ahead this evening, came forward to help her. While being undressed the star covered her face and neck with cold cream; then, wiping it off, began to make herself up with rouge and colored pencils. It was all so unlike what Helen had been taught to expect. There was no disagreeable element, no flowers, no men clamoring at the door; everything was quiet, everyone deferential and obliging.

During the performance Helen was taken in front. The play charmed her; the applause of the audience thrilled her as though she herself were the beautiful, daintily garbed maid of the sixteenth century that Constance Belmont impersonated.

She joined in the enthusiastic applause involuntarily, her pulses leaping with a touch of the energy that had left her in that black hour of her awakening in Brooklyn.

"Well, what is your opinion of a star's life, so far?" asked a clear, genial voice at her side. She looked up, and beheld Vincent Haughtly's handsome face smiling upon her.

"Oh, I am captivated," she replied. "I am stage-struck!"

Haughtly's eyes responded to the life in hers; he took the vacant

seat beside her. "Really?" he said, with evident satisfaction. "Why, I imagined you were rather averse to it."

"Oh, no; I was only ignorant. It seems to me a great art. I should love to go up there and portray some character just as I feel it, and know that my interpretation was appreciated by an audience like this. Oh, it must be splendid!"

Haughtly watched her admiringly. "It is only a momentary fancy," he said; "you see the beautiful outside, the enjoyable harvest of much labor. There are years of drudgery back of each little part in these scenes that appear to run along so smoothly and easily."

"Of course," Helen responded. "Everyone who succeeds has that back of him—even a pianist."

"Yes, that's true; but the stage needs physical and mental labor combined; it necessitates absolute self-command and entire attention."

"But there is more to work for," returned Helen. "The life is so full of interest and—possibilities, I should think."

He regarded her hesitatingly. "Would you be willing to go through the drudgery to become a star?" he asked.

Helen looked surprised. "What do you think?—that I am very lazy and unambitious?"

"Oh, no, only—you don't look like the style of girl who would aspire to this sort of thing."

"I have always so misunderstood the stage. It is far more interesting than I ever imagined. I think it would be a splendid way to—lose oneself."

Haughtly laughed. "To lose oneself?" he repeated. "Surely you have no ambition to do that."

Helen looked away; her beautiful profile, the slight drooping of her mouth, expressed a secret sadness. He wondered what it meant, what grief could have come to darken her life so soon.

"You might make a great success on the stage," he said after a moment; "you have everything to your advantage."

"I have a friend who used to tell me that so often," returned Helen, smiling as she remembered Miss Elison's arguments, "but I never considered it a possibility."

"If you ever should consider it, I wish you would come to me," said Haughtly gently, "I think I might be able to help you."

"Are you serious?" she asked.

"Perfectly; I am more than serious; I am interested."

His eyes expressed more than interest, and Helen avoided them. They were fine eyes of a rich, golden brown; they had appealed to her the moment she first met them fixed upon her in genuine interest at Mrs. Manning's house. She had never known a man with the same charm of intellect, the same sincere gravity, and it soothed her to feel

that such a one should find her entertaining, although she took no personal interest in him. To her the whole sex was represented by Herbert, and through him had lost attractiveness. To him she had given the best her young nature could offer, only to be ruthlessly sacrificed. Suffering had outgrown romance; she looked for no more.

After that evening a new thought gave interest to her days, the thought of working towards an aim that held more promise than anything she had before dreamed of. She longed to lose herself in an absorbing occupation, in an ambition that would help her to forget the past. The more she thought of it, the more impatient she became to take Mr. Haughtly at his word and make the attempt. But trouble had given her a distrust of promised happiness. He might only have spoken in an impulse of friendliness. She could not believe that any real intention had instigated his words.

Yet the following Sunday afternoon Mrs. Manning pressed her hand significantly, as she greeted her from behind the tea-table, and whispered, "I have something to tell you, dear, something interesting. You must stay and dine with us."

There were eight or ten persons gathered about the Star, which rendered explanation impossible,—composers, artists, and literary men. Even to sit silent and listen was sufficiently interesting, but Helen was immediately drawn into conversation with Mr. Rinot, a retired actor from the German stage and a dramatist of note. Helen had attracted him the first day when he bowed before her in formal acknowledgment of Mrs. Manning's introduction. He seemed rather gruff, especially in an argument where he had stormed and gesticulated. He was a typical German thinker with a touch of the eccentric. Well built, shoulders considerably bowed from study, his beard and hair touched with silver, the kindness of his blue eyes concealed behind glasses, he presented an interesting though somewhat brusque personality.

Helen soon saw beyond his glasses, and the tender heart that lay beneath, the keenness of perception that commanded confidence in all for whom he was willing to exercise it.

"I think there are great chances for you," he said, "and if Vincent Haughtly takes interest in you, your future is made."

"Why? He is not a manager, is he?"

"A manager!" Mr. Rinot struck his brow with dramatic fury and laughed contemptuously. "Ye gods of Olympus! that's good! That's very good!" then, turning upon her, he added more gently, "He is the foremost dramatist of this country. At this present time he has a play in four different theatres here. Do you think a mere manager has much more power than he? My dear young lady, he could put you to the top in no time. Very simple!"

"But do you think I have any ability?" Helen was already flushed with enthusiasm.

Rinot twisted, shrugged his shoulders, and grunted. "Ugh! that remains to be seen. If you will exercise much effort, and much determination, you are bound to accomplish something, eh! Very simple!"

"But I have so little courage; I should never be able to walk before an audience, much less to say anything."

Rinot leaned forward and struck one hand with the other. "Very good!" he exclaimed in a low voice of intense gratification. "You could not have a better attribute. The bold women do not make the great actresses. They have no temperament. The actress needs temperament and intelligence; very simple! If Mrs. Manning is willing to give you up, I will be very pleased to coach you a little. I will do this for you because I like you, eh!"

"Oh, will you?" said Helen delightedly. "If I could only take this up seriously, I would put all my life into it."

The German smiled. "Until the prince comes," he said; "oh, yes, until some young fellow comes along, then you will give yourself to him 'for better or for worse'! Oh, I know you!"

Helen lifted her hand appealingly. "Oh, no, not that," she said.

"What! have you had enough of them already?" asked her companion with an amused twinkle.

"Yes, quite enough. But do you think Mrs. Manning will consent? You know I am engaged to travel with her."

"I know. There's the rub! She is so delighted in finding such a charming companion, that she may not be willing to part with you. But she is generous, she has a good heart, and seeing this fine opening for you, she will no doubt release you and get someone else! Very simple."

At this moment Mr. Gotweld, a celebrated composer, went to the piano to improvise quietly. Mrs. Manning sat near in a large arm-chair, her chin in her hand, her eyes fixed in dreamy satisfaction upon vacancy, as she listened to the strange, suggestive melody his fingers awaked.

"Isn't it wonderful," murmured a young author to Helen when the musician ceased. "The making of music seems something absolutely apart from physical conception."

His words aroused Helen from melancholy dreaminess.

"It certainly is not material," she returned; "I feel it stirring something within me that I never knew before."

"The mystery is how one man can create melody that means so much to others, even to those like me who haven't the slightest bit of music in their whole anatomy."

Helen laughed. "And it comes so easily to him, his fingers seem to do it without the control of thought."

"It is probably a musician's medium of thought. You know when a beggar asked alms of Mozart, and he happened to have no money about him, he would write him a minuet that could be sold for hundreds of francs."

"Mozart thought melody," said Rinot in his abrupt way. "Even when a boy he remembered and wrote down correctly Allegri's 'Miserere' after hearing it once at the Sistine Chapel."

When the composer had departed, Mrs. Manning approached Helen and took her hand.

"Come, I want to talk to you," she said, and added to the others, "Mr. Rinot, take our young scribe into the dining-room; Mr. Manning is there and will give you something to cheer you." Then, with mysteriously suppressed glee, she led Helen into the little reception-room, now vacated, and confided to her that she had had a talk with Mr. Haughtly, who had asked her to resign Helen to him. "I recognize that the chance is a very great one for you," she continued, "and we finally came to an agreement satisfactory to both—you are to enter my company as one of the gypsies. In this way we will travel together, and at the same time you will be gaining experience and stage confidence."

Helen was so delighted she could scarcely speak coherently. "But how shall I ever have the courage!" she exclaimed, after expressing her pleasure and gratitude.

"Oh, you will have nothing to say," returned Mrs. Manning. "You just run on and make a noise with a lot of others. After a little while you may be sufficiently confident to take the part of the old woman, Fortunita, who has only seven words to say; and both Mr. Haughtly and I think you might work up into a good part by the time his new play is put on next winter."

"Oh, thank you," said Helen, pressing the warm, sympathetic hand between hers, "you certainly have been good to me, and I shall work so hard to try to be worthy of your interest."

"Well, my embryo star!" said Manning later, in his genial, wholehearted way on finding Helen and his wife still talking confidentially after the others had departed, "how does a dramatic future appeal to you?"

"I am simply beside myself with happiness!" returned Helen gleefully; "nothing could have been proposed more acceptable to me at this time, and I am going to work hard."

"Good!" Manning patted her on the back encouragingly, "and if Vincent Haughtly does not treat you well, you come to me; I am

ready to fight for you. After witnessing that duel in the 'Bride of Senico,' you know I can fight. Here's my hand on it."

He extended a strong, finely moulded hand, and looked down upon her with the grave smile so characteristic of him and so much more expressive than words. "There is nothing to prevent your rising now; all you need is pluck and perseverance."

#### XIV.

THE winter was one of intense interest to Helen; she enjoyed every hour of their travels. Even the one-night stands in little out-of-the-way Western towns amused her greatly. The drudgery was absolutely ignored—it was welcome. Romance for her was a thing of the past; her ambition was fired, and under the control of it she forgot the sorrowful ending of her first love-dream. In Constance Belmont she had found a kind, intelligent, and sympathetic friend, and her one regret was that they would before long be obliged to part.

Her absorption in the work she had undertaken enabled her to conquer quickly her native timidity, and in a short time she was given the second role in Mrs. Manning's company. In this she began to attract considerable attention in the West because of her unusual beauty, although this was placed somewhat at a disadvantage when compared with the star's recognized supremacy.

The following summer months Helen spent in the city studying under Mr. Rinot, who had undertaken to prepare her to play the important part of Christina in Mr. Haughtly's new play, with the understanding that she was to reimburse him for his time and pains only when she could do so conveniently. During that time she enjoyed no association; she buried herself in work, living in a tiny hall room in a boarding-house, and going daily to her teacher.

The Mannings were spending the summer in Europe, and she did not expect to see them before September. To this month she looked forward impatiently, anxious to know what her friends would think of her advancement, and half fearful of the day when she was to appear on the stage for the first time in New York.

As it turned out, she was not in the least nervous, and her drilling had been so thorough and correct that she won much applause for her conception of the part and for her beauty, which was praised by newspaper critics.

After a short time letters came to her from people in the audience expressing their appreciation of her work, and from photographers inviting her to their studios for sittings, and for two successive weeks she had received a box of gorgeous violets sent anonymously every evening.

Mrs. Manning amused her greatly by recounting, one Sunday, the

exaggerated admiration of a young society beau whom Constance knew, and who had made one of Helen's audience every night since the play in which she took part had first made its appearance.

"He is coming here this afternoon, Helen," she exclaimed with a bright laugh, "and I believe it is he who has been sending you those anonymous violets. So prepare to meet your fate."

"My fate," said Helen dryly. "I think I met that in you. I certainly am not looking for anything better."

Constance's eyes, always so responsive to her feelings, softened tenderly. "Oh, there is a lot of happiness in store for you yet," she said, "but I shouldn't consider it a good thing for you to marry Bobby Featherstone; he is too fast."

Helen's heart leapt as she heard that name. "Featherstone!" she exclaimed, "is that his name?"

"Yes, Robert Featherstone. Why? Do you know anything about him?"

"No; except—that was the name of a great friend of—my husband. And I am sure he used to call him Bob."

"How funny! You may hear something of your husband from him. It would be a strange coincidence."

Helen arose. "No," she said, "I don't want to meet him. That chapter of my life is closed; I have no desire to reopen it."

"But, my dear, if he has never seen you, he will never guess who you are."

"I know, but—he might speak of him. I couldn't bear it."

Mrs. Manning followed her to the door and took her hand. "Dear, do you still care?" she asked, seeking to read the truth in the girl's face.

Helen raised her head. "No, not in the least," she said. "All I can feel is anger; and yet the very fact that everything connected with that episode is hateful makes me dread anything that will recall it."

"I know how you feel, dear," said Constance, "and I shall not attempt to keep you, although I did want you to meet the Oakleys. Be sure you come in next Sunday."

As Helen turned to the front door Mr. Manning's secretary hurried across the hall with a letter.

"Mr. Haughtly asked me to give you this, Miss Morton," he said. "It was brought by a messenger to the theatre last night after you had left."

"Thank you, Mr. Hobbins," said Helen; "I hope it isn't—why, this is from——" She stepped more into the light to examine the superscription, which was familiar, although she could not at once place it. At the same moment the front door was opened to admit Mr. Featherstone, closely followed by Mr. and Mrs. Oakley.

"It is too bad! there is no escaping now," whispered Constance.

"Come in for a moment. I shall try to keep the conversation from the subject you dread."

"This is great luck," murmured Featherstone after the introduction. "I had scarcely hoped to meet you here, Miss Morton. This is a red-letter day, for in it I have realized one of my dearest ambitions." He was looking about the same as in the days when he and Herbert were such close friends, although somewhat stouter and more bloated. He watched her with insinuating attentiveness.

Helen made some unconsidered reply; his proximity annoyed her, and, in addition to this, she was puzzled over the handwriting on the note she was now prevented from opening.

Mrs. Manning took them into the little reception-room, where afternoon tea was served, and Helen seated herself near Mrs. Oakley. Featherstone, however, refused to see any wish to avoid him in her action, and drew a chair close to her.

"I have had a seat in the front row ever since the night you opened," he whispered. "I wonder my silent prayers did not reach you through mental telegraphy."

"Probably because my mind is always too occupied to pay attention to any one individual," returned Helen indifferently.

"Are individuals of no account to you?"

"None—except as units to make up an audience."

"You are encouraging!"

"Did you expect to be the only unit?"

"I long to be. Will you let me try?"

Helen realized she had made a false step. "Individuals do not exist for me," she said sweepingly. "I look on humanity as a whole—a body whose applause I seek."

"You have had mine since the first moment my eyes beheld you. I even ventured to bestow upon you a silent tribute of my admiration. May I continue it?"

"The violets?" she asked.

"Will you permit me still to send them? The slight communication will be more of a joy, now that I know you accept them from me."

"So far my maid has enjoyed them," said Helen. "I never accept anything sent anonymously."

"But now,—will you accept them now?"

Helen was spared replying by the entrance of a very handsome young woman, fashionably gowned in pearl gray, and wearing the air of a social pet. The instant she looked at her she was thrilled by some recollection. The narrow gray eyes falling upon her seemed to see through her, yet Helen instinctively drew herself up with a slight inward quiver of animosity.

"Mrs. Tinsley Burton," whispered Featherstone as he arose to greet her.



A moment later Helen was acknowledging the introduction through which Constance made her known to the newcomer.

"I can only stay a moment," said the Widow in her peculiarly attractive voice; "just stopped in to let you know I had returned."

"When did you arrive?" asked Constance. "I had no idea you were on this side."

"I got in Wednesday. Shall only be here a week, as I have promised to spend the rest of the season in Washington."

"Is your flame with you?" asked Featherstone later, with the boldness of one who feels pretty sure of his ground.

Mrs. Burton raised her straight brows very slightly.

"My flame?" she said. "Do you mean Bert? Oh, no; I lost him somewhere on the Continent. He is such a persistent boy; I found him rather in the way."

"Why, I heard he was in town yesterday," said Featherstone in surprise.

"Very probably," returned Mrs. Burton; "I believe he followed in the next steamer. You know, I suppose, that he made quite a little fortune at the games in Monte Carlo?"

"No, I know nothing about him," returned Bobby coldly.

"Oh, I forgot you two had quarrelled." Mrs. Burton laughed lightly. "Well, he had phenomenal luck—almost broke the bank, in fact. Now he is doing his best to spend the money and wreck his health at the same time."

Helen heard this conversation indifferently; to her the name Bert conveyed nothing, and her thoughts were occupied trying to place the handwriting on the note Mr. Hobbins had given her and which she held unopened in her lap. Suddenly it came to her, and with it the memory of her ever-true friend, Sam Monroe, with his strong, grave face and stalwart form. She wondered how he had discovered her and why he had written.

"Do come in Thursday evening after the theatre," Constance said to Mrs. Burton as the latter was about to depart, "and bring your 'Bert' if you wish. It's me lord's birthday, and we shall have a jolly time. You must come too, Helen, and you, Mr. Featherstone. It will be a surprise party; me lord is to know nothing about it."

"I am afraid there will be a fisticuff if Bert and Bobby are brought together," laughed Mrs. Burton, "so I had better decline for him."

"Oh, no, bring him," returned Constance. "This will be a feast of the passover,—everyone must forgive his enemies!"

"Very well, if you are willing to take the consequences, I shall bring him."

"There is no danger," remarked Featherstone curtly. "We are gentlemen, I hope."

"Yes, modern gentlemen," replied the Widow, "which is no guarantee against rudeness. How do you like the house, Constance?"

"I am charmed with it," replied Mrs. Manning. "Your coming makes me anticipate with grief the day we must give it up."

"Oh, no, you need not fear that; I sha'n't want it for years yet. It is a relief to be rid of that tortoise-feeling of having one's house always over one."

Constance laughed. "I haven't had a home long enough to be tired of it yet," she said. "It is a delightful sensation to remain even a winter in one place."

Helen took advantage of Mrs. Burton's departure to take leave herself, being possessed with an unconquerable curiosity to read Sam's letter. As she arose Featherstone asked to see her home, but she declined, giving some plausible excuse which, though perfectly polite, made it clear that she did not want him. She walked quickly along the darkening streets, impatient for the privacy of her rooms, where she might peruse the note uninterrupted.

#### XV.

SAM's note was brief and characteristic; it stated that after much futile searching he had by a mere chance recognized her on the stage the previous evening. He begged, in the name of his loyal and unchanging friendship, to be allowed to see her as soon as possible, as he had much to tell her of home and much to ask her.

The straightforward, manly tone of the note brought the tears to Helen's eyes, with a vivid memory of this man who had been so kind and patient in the past. She held the page for an instant to her face, seeing the wide, calm fields of Stratford again, the red chimneys of the Monroe place, the slender pines in the background. She seemed to breathe the perfumed airs of summer, to hear the rasping cry of guinea-fowl as she pushed through the box-wood that divided the two places. She saw Sam crossing the lawn to greet her as he was wont to do in those far-off days, his strong face lighted by a tender smile whose meaning she had then refused to recognize.

As she mused the tears ran down her face, and, almost blinded by them, she wrote a hurried line to Sam asking him to come that evening. This she dispatched by a messenger, then, after a hurried dinner, dressed to receive him.

The two years had brought more alteration to Sam than to her. He appeared much older and more developed; his face had acquired a distinguished seriousness that added to its manly attractiveness and expressed the good intellect back of his steady blue eyes. He was dressed entirely in black.

"I have had a long search for you," he said after they had ex-

changed the first words of greeting, "and had almost given up in despair—though I meant to find *him*."

"The people at home," said Helen hurriedly, "how are they? Tell me about them."

"What I have to tell will shock you," said Sam gravely. "Father heard of—Herbert in London; the truth came to us both at once. It broke his heart."

Helen caught his hand, her face paled. "You don't mean——" she said in horror as her eyes surveyed his black clothing.

"Yes; he died inside of a month. Later I went to London, trying to trace Herbert,—to hear something of you; while I was away mother followed him."

"Oh—Sam." Helen bowed her head upon his arm and sobbed bitterly. "If I had only known! I might have made it easier for them," she said. "But I thought—I thought it was better to conceal everything,—that perhaps you all would never know."

"I felt it in my heart from the very beginning," said Sam hoarsely. "That night when they told us you were gone an awful depression settled down on me like a foreboding of evil, though my worst fears never pictured anything so horrible as the truth."

Helen looked up and dried her eyes. "It was fate," she said softly. "Perhaps if I had not suffered as I did then, I never would have made any success of my life. Now, as I look back, I only regret it all for your sake, and—the old people. My heart aches for them, Sam. If only I could have done something to lessen their sorrow."

"Nothing would have lessened it but a proof of their son's innocence," he returned solemnly. "Could you have given them this?"

Beneath the keen glance of his honest eyes Helen's fell. "He left me," she said quietly, "I could not deny that; but—there may have been conditions that none of us know of."

"Can you attempt to defend him?" asked Sam, with a strange commingling of scorn and wonderment.

"The thing is past; it does not belong now to my life," replied Helen. "He killed the child he married; he never knew me as a woman. I can judge him with the coldness of a stranger; I can even be generous, because it all means nothing to me now."

Sam watched her attentively. "He left you," he said gravely. "Is that all?"

"She did not reply at once, for though she had been expecting this question, she hoped he would not ask it. "Tell me, Helen; I want to know the truth," said Sam, and his voice quivered with the emotion that possessed him.

Helen sought to avoid the question. "Was that not enough?" she

asked. "What worse could a man do his wife than desert her in the first month of their marriage?"

Sam's eyes did not leave her face. "I have a suspicion that he wronged you in another way," he said in a scarcely audible voice, "and I must know. He had no money, yet he went from you to Europe." He leaned nearer and clinched his hands nervously. "Helen, tell me. I can't stand this suspense any longer,—did he rob you?"

Helen's heart seemed to stop. Never before had she allowed the matter to take such shape in her mind, but now she was forced to view the crime in its reality. She suffered only for Sam, the agony of suspense in his face was pitiable, and by her reply she sought merely to spare him.

"Nonsense, Sam; why do you think such things," she said. "He—may have gone with friends."

"No, he had money with him. I learned that beyond a doubt. Where is yours, Helen? Prove to me that you have it, and I shall believe him innocent. Prove it to me! God knows I want to believe it!" He started up and crossed the room excitedly, with hands clinched and head bowed. "I knew it," he continued bitterly, accepting her silence as answer, "when I saw you were working for your living; when I recognized your brave little face in that glaring false atmosphere facing the crowd fearlessly, courageously, in spite of all the wrong done you; oh, I knew it." His voice broke hoarsely, and he paced a moment in silence. As Helen watched him the savage determination in his white face frightened her, and yet she could not but admire the strength expressed in his every movement. He appeared much too big for the little room; his head towered to the chandelier, his impatient footsteps made ornaments on the table quiver. There was not an ounce of superfluous flesh upon him; he was muscular and broadly built, but not heavy.

"We cannot judge him, Sam," she said softly, "his life was so different from ours. He was thrown into that reckless, gay life, there——"

Sam turned passionately. "Judge him!" he exclaimed. "I shall leave that to the justice of the law. Now is his hour of retribution, and if he lives I shall find him and drag him to the punishment he has escaped too long."

Helen rose and laid her hand on his arm. "Sam, don't talk like that," she said gently, "it doesn't sound like you."

He looked into her beautiful upturned face, and a spasm of feeling crossed his own. He tried to avoid her. "You can't expect me to be as great as you," he said with deep feeling. "Your soul is a thing of heaven; you can forgive, but I cannot, and will not."

Helen followed him. "What have I done?" she said appealingly. "Do I deserve punishment? Have I not suffered enough, Sam?"

He drew a deep breath. "Oh, yes, I know you have, I know," he said, "but he must not go free any longer; it is an outrage to justice!"

"Sam, in punishing him you punish me," said Helen. "To drag this thing up now before the public will do no good, and it will hurt me very much. His punishment will come; he will bring it on himself."

As he looked into her pleading eyes Sam's face relaxed. "Do you mean that you wish him to go free?" he asked,—“this fellow who has wronged you so greatly? You love him still enough to forgive all this?"

"Love him!" repeated Helen sorrowfully. "I have too great a contempt for him even to desire vengeance. He infatuated my childish fancy; his treachery awoke me suddenly. I am now a woman, on the threshold of great success. I don't want him to ruin me again, therefore I wish to forget."

Sam's head hung low, he stared at the floor. "Yes, I see," he said. "You are right. I can only pray God that he is never brought again across my path."

In his lined and colorless face Helen read the bitter anguish of those two years that had so prematurely aged him. Remembering his generosity towards Herbert in the past, his self-effacement even when the secret of his great, silent love had escaped him unawares, she could not but respect his righteous anger. Her heart ached for him, and the frozen current of her sympathies stirred with something of the old girlish tenderness as she realized how good he had always been to her since the days of her childhood.

"Sam, don't let it worry you any more," she said. "I am happy now, and your father and mother are not here to worry over it. Who would be benefited by punishing him?"

"I know," he replied more gently. "If you don't wish it, Helen, of course there is nothing to be done. No doubt he is punished enough in his own conscience. He can't hold his head up here in his native country. Yet I have a suspicion he is here now."

"In New York?" exclaimed Helen. "It can't be!"

"A friend of mine said he thought he saw the notice of his arrival in a paper; but I can't find any trace of him, so there must have been a mistake."

"Are you living here now?" asked Helen.

"Yes, I am settled here as district attorney, a place I've been working for for nearly two years."

"That is splendid! I always felt you would succeed, Sam,"—she held out her hand to him,—“and I do congratulate you. If any man ever deserved success, you do."

Sam took her hand between his, and his color deepened slightly as he looked upon her with a quiet smile. "Success is such a complex word," he said. "I used to be able to define my idea of it, but some time ago it slipped from me. Now I just work because—it seems the best thing to do."

## XVI.

ON Sunday evening, after the theatre, Helen went to Mrs. Manning's, as she had promised. She would not have missed that birthday supper. Manning had been so kind and had taken so much interest in her progress, in spite of the great odds against which he was struggling to retain the place he had won in the public's heart. She knew the storms he had weathered, the false lights in which he had been placed since he first dared to strike out for himself and be his own manager, and she honored him for the courage he had shown.

Featherstone, who occupied his accustomed seat in the front, sent Helen a note between acts to ask if he might escort her to the Mannings'. It was the first of his many requests she was willing to accede to, for although the man did not appeal to her, she thought it might appear better in the eyes of Mrs. Burton, concerning whose opinion she was secretly anxious.

On entering the Mannings' house she was called by Mr. Manning, who was sitting in the reception-room with Haughtly and another man whom she did not know. Featherstone proceeded to the dining-room, where Constance was already surrounded by guests.

As Helen turned back she heard Mrs. Burton's clear voice say laughingly, "Well, Bobby, did you bring your beautiful Christina with you? Bert, when you see her draw no comparisons, for— Now, puppies, don't glare at each other as if——"

The remainder she lost, for Haughtly had risen and was presenting her to Carl Burlington, one of the most progressive and important managers in the profession.

"Miss Morton," said Haughtly, "in fairness to you Mr. Manning and I thought it best to tell you at once of the proposition Mr. Burlington has come to make me in your behalf. He is putting on a new production the middle of this season; he considers the part particularly suited to you and offers to star you in it."

Helen flushed and looked quickly from one to the other. "This winter!" she exclaimed.

"Yes, Miss Morton," said the manager, "the play is one of unusual merit by Gastro, will be produced at the Empire, and is bound to make a hit."

Helen's heart quickened; she turned to her two friends. "What do you think?" she asked.

Haughtly was fingering an ornament on the table; he did not look up, leaving it to Manning to reply.

"Of course, it is an unusual opportunity," said the latter, "if you think it wise to make such a precipitous leap."

She looked with brilliant eyes upon the manager. "Do you think I would be capable of it?" she asked.

"Yes, we are certain of that," was the reply. "The part is as though it were expressly written for you."

"But what would you do, Mr. Haughtly?" said Helen, a cloud crossing her face. "It would break right into the middle of your season here."

Haughtly smiled sadly. "I don't want to stand in your way," he said. "Mr. Burlington is a friend of mine, and he is offering you a great chance which I should not want you to lose through me."

"But our contract binds me to you the full year."

"Yes, I know. But we couldn't foresee a thing like this. It is a chance that would come only once in a lifetime,—if once, to one who has been such a short time on the stage."

"How good you are! Then do you wish me to take it? Do you advise it?"

"I am afraid to advise for fear personal ambition may influence me."

Helen turned to Manning. "What do you think?" she asked.

"Well, if you want my sincere opinion, I should say, don't take it," returned Manning in his decided way. "It will not be an advantage to star you in the fall; you couldn't do better than that."

qui vive to find fault. The critics will be prejudiced, and even if you do your work above reproach, they will think it necessary to consider you raw. Haughtly is writing a play for you now in which he means to star you in the fall; you couldn't do better than that."

She turned beamingly to Haughtly. "Are you?" she exclaimed. "Why didn't you tell me?"

"I was keeping it for souvenir night, as a sort of birthday gift," he said, smiling.

"Oh, I am delighted!" exclaimed Helen, extending her hand to him. "No, I must decline your offer," she added to Burlington, "tempting as it is, and I thank you very much."

"I could offer you some inducements," said the manager, smiling. "Of course, I wouldn't do so against the wishes of these two friends, but they have given me permission."

"I appreciate your goodness, but nothing would persuade me. I owe everything to Mr. Haughtly and Mr. Manning, and their advice will always guide me."

"Well, you've won, Haughtly!" said Burlington, patting the dramatist-manager on the back. "I thank you, however, for giving me the chance."

"I thank you, old man, for your consideration," returned Haughtly, "and I more than appreciate your decision, Miss Morton."

"Well, come in and pledge me an easier year than the past one," said Manning jovially, as he strode towards the dining-room, "'Come, fill the cup that clears to-day of past regret and future fears.'"

They followed him, laughing.

"Well," exclaimed Constance, "who was victorious?"

"The man with the most self-satisfied expression, of course," said Manning, looking at Haughtly.

"Well, you are that one," returned his wife, and everyone laughed save the man sitting behind Mrs. Burton.

He had sprung to his feet as the three entered, and now stood like one petrified, his face ghastly, his eyes fixed upon Helen.

She did not see him until Constance said:

"Helen, I think you know everyone here except Mr. Monroe. Mr. Monroe, Miss Morton is the young comet we have been speaking of, whom managers are clamoring already to star."

As Helen looked into that white, emaciated face, marked almost beyond recognition by the reckless dissipation by which he had for two years sought to deaden his conscience, her pulses stopped an instant, the room darkened before her eyes. She quickly steadied herself against the back of a chair, and by sheer force of will regained control.

"Are you feeling badly, dear?" asked Constance, who noticed her face pale, as did Haughtly, who went to her at once and offered his arm.

"Oh, no," she replied, throwing her head back, "only—the excitement of—this flattering interview has been a little too much for me. If you will give me some wine—thanks."

"I have heard laudations of you on every side, Miss Morton," said the Widow, "and I want to add my little tribute, your Christina is simply perfect."

"Thank you," said Helen quietly. She was looking into her glass, while through her mind was passing the conversation she had heard when last she sat in that house with Mrs. Burton. It all came to her clearly now; she understood that the "Bert" of whom this woman had spoken with such contemptuous proprietorship was the man who had duped and degraded her, whom she had married in the innocent good faith of her love.

Conversation continued in the same light vein about her, but she heard nothing. Her blood was running hot and cold in quick succession; an anger such as she had never considered herself capable of was quickly gaining mastery of her.

It was for this woman that he had left her? For her he had stooped to his contemptible crime!



She heard the Widow's cold, clear voice above all others; it lashed her like a whip-cord. She dared not lift her head; she felt she must hold herself in check against some outburst that would reveal all to her unsuspecting friends, and create a scandal that would fly like wild-fire abroad.

Unconsciously she listened for his voice, dreading it, yet curious to hear it.

Since she had entered the room Herbert had not uttered a sound. Unnoticed by anyone, he remained standing, though all the others were seated, genially talking and drinking toasts. Like a spectre at the feast he stood back of them, his eyes fixed upon Helen, his attenuated form stiff as a corpse, his hands clinched.

Constance, ever considerate of others, turned to toast him, holding her tall glass of sparkling champagne gleefully in air. The shock of his appearance was so great, it slipped from her fingers and crashed upon the floor.

"Mr. Monroe, what is it? Why do you stand?" she asked in startled tones. Everyone's attention was at once attracted, and Helen looked up.

As Herbert's eyes, fixed upon her with that strange stare, met hers he uttered a wild shriek and shrank back in an effort to escape her.

"Take her away!" he cried. "For God's sake, take her away!"

The men sprang up and seized him, thinking him intoxicated. Every face blanched; even the women had started from their chairs, trembling as they watched the struggling group.

"It's just like him to come here in this condition," growled Featherstone as he seized Herbert's arm. The latter clung to him like a terrified child.

"Take her away!" he groaned again, then fell in a heap to the ground laughing hysterically, and babbling unintelligibly in helpless lunacy.

"He isn't drunk," said Manning quietly. "Help me to get him out of here; he is suffering from some nervous collapse."

"It's a bad case," whispered Burlington. "I saw a man taken this way before, though there was reason then." He glanced curiously at Helen.

Mrs. Burton was watching her closely, her eyes almost closed, like those of a cat waiting for its prey to approach. The delicate, artificial coloring of her face showed distinctly against its sudden pallor, and although she was the first of the women to regain composure, she was obviously much affected.

"He seems to be afraid of you, Miss Morton?" she said, with a slight interrogation.

Constance looked at the girl in bewilderment.

"Yes, Helen——" she began, but as Helen swayed slightly, as though about to faint, she hurried to her. "Dear, you are ill," she said. "What does it all mean?"

Mrs. Burton returned to her chair, a cold smile curving her lips. "It is the most extraordinary affair I ever witnessed," she remarked.

The words brought Helen to her senses. She drew herself up. "It has unnerved me terribly," she said quietly. "The performance was trying to-night; I was not in a condition for—anything like this."

"But have you ever met before?" persisted the Widow, still watching her. "My curiosity is intensely aroused."

Helen became suddenly calm; she looked coldly into the narrow gray eyes.

"Why are you curious?" she asked. "Is he anything to you?"

Mrs. Burton's eyes wavered. "Anything to me? I don't understand," she said frigidly.

"I cannot consider my curiosity any less presumptuous than yours," returned Helen with equal hauteur; then, laying a hand on Constance, who stood near her, she added, "You will forgive me if I go, dear, won't you? I feel quite ill."

Her hostess went with her to the reception-room to get her wraps.

"This is awful," she said. "I wonder if it means an evil omen to Jack."

"Oh, no; it only means an evil omen to me."

"To you! What do you mean?"

"I mean—— Oh Constance, that man is my husband!"

"What!" Mrs. Manning stared. "You don't mean it!—Mr. Monroe?"

Helen looked dry-eyed into space as she fastened her furs. "He seems so little like the man I married, the being who filled my life like a god so long! Poor wretch! What he has come to!"

"Do you feel none of the old sentiment?" asked Constance.

"I feel only pity—intense pity," said Helen sadly. "Heavens! to think what he has come to!"

"I wish you would stay here to-night," murmured her friend. "I don't think you are in a condition to be alone, Helen."

"Oh, yes, I am all right. Where did they take him?"

"I don't know, probably to his home."

Catching sight of Mr. Hobbins, who was crossing the hall, Mrs. Manning called out to him, "Do you know where Mr. Manning went, Mr. Hobbins?"

"Yes, he and Mr. Featherstone went to the hospital with Mr. Monroe," was the reply. "He was in such a condition that both thought it best to accompany him."

"Where is Mr. Haughtly?"

"He is outside with Mr. Burlington. They are coming in now."

"I don't wish to see them just now," said Helen hurriedly. "Mr. Hobbins, will you send for a cab for me, please?"

"There is one outside," returned Hobbins. "If you will permit me, I will be glad to accompany you."

"Thank you, yes," returned Helen, and added to Constance, "I know where to find Mr. Monroe's brother. I shall send him a note immediately, so he can go to him. Good-night, dear."

"Good-night; let me hear from you to-morrow." As Haughtly and his companion appeared Helen shrank back of the portières, and Mrs. Manning took them into the dining-room, where the Widow still sat alone, and apparently not very well pleased by an event which had left her both puzzled and humiliated.

#### XVII.

HELEN saw Sam many times during that winter and the following summer. Through his able efforts she succeeded in obtaining a divorce from Herbert, who had become permanently deranged, and had been removed to a private sanatorium. It was found that he had run through the fortune acquired at Monte Carlo, and every dollar of Helen's fifteen thousand. Sam, however, was making a good income and took upon himself all Herbert's expenses for the remainder of his brother's life, refusing to accept the assistance that Helen offered.

The latter's life was moving rapidly towards the zenith of success. The play Mr. Haughtly had written for her was one of uncommon merit and interest. Helen entered into it with all her heart and mind; she fairly lived the part, and on that momentous night when she was to make her first appearance as a star, so engrossed had she become in the character she was to portray that she wholly forgot for the time her own individuality.

The house was crowded, for Helen's beauty was now universally recognized, and her rapid ascension to stellar heights had attracted much attention.

Her reception was even more enthusiastic than she had looked for; bursts of applause greeted her, and expressed the audience's appreciation at every good touch she made. After the first act the theatre rang from pit to gallery with thunderous and sustained plaudits; superb floral offerings were presented over the foot-lights until the stage appeared like a garden of bloom.

Helen knew that incomparable joy experienced only by those who succeed in the art they love. In that hour of triumph all sorrow of the past was forgotten. She moved like one in a dream. The hand-pressures of sympathetic friends and congratulatory voices were scarcely appreciated by her whirling brain. Two hundred telegrams

had reached her, many from people she had never met, all expressing enthusiastic congratulations and encouragement. Among them was a tender, manly note from Sam, who asked the privilege of taking her home after the performance. Although several others sought the same favor, she granted his request, for in her joyousness none other seemed to appeal as did he.

The Mannings were giving her a supper that night, and she had had a beautiful gown of pale blue crepe de chine sent her from Ducet for the occasion. At this supper were to be several great lights in the dramatic world, first and foremost among them Madame Sarah Bernhardt, for whom Constance had an absorbing admiration.

"No words could ever express to you how much your success means to me," said Sam when they were in the carriage, "and yet my selfishness destroys to me the joy of it."

"How, Sam? Selfishness was never a characteristic of yours." Helen smiled as she spoke, and laid her hand on his. "Why do you always try to make yourself appear unworthy?"

His face was pale; she could see its stern, handsome outline in the gloom, and felt his hand quiver slightly under hers.

"I have never told you what you probably have guessed long ago," he said in the restrained, deep tone of strong feeling. "My love for you has grown up with me—it is part of my life. Always you have been beyond my reach—now more than ever."

For an instant Helen could not reply. The intense meaning in those words seemed to charge the atmosphere about them with some significant force; she felt it tingling in her veins. It was the force of a love that had become part of this strong man; a strength on which, unrecognized, she had depended since her earliest childhood.

She lifted his hand and laid her cheek upon it.

"Oh Sam, I don't know how to answer you," she said softly. "There is no man—no, and there never was and never could be—whom I honor and love as I do you. I have had brilliant offers, as you know, in this past year, but there is no other man on earth but you whom I would be willing to marry if I could even contemplate marrying anyone. But my art absorbs me now. I am wedded to it; no other influence could usurp its place."

There was an instant's silence; she heard Sam draw his breath deeply; his hand closed upon hers.

"I know," he said with evident effort at self-control, "I was wrong to speak. But—Helen, if you ever get tired, if the glamour of success ever palls upon you and you should desire the love and protection of a man, will you come to me? I shall wait for you forever. Will you believe and trust in my love always?"

There was so much manly courage in his voice, so much generosity

in the restraint he had put upon himself, that Helen longed to throw her arms about him and give way to the wave of tender feeling that possessed her. But this she knew would not be wise; it was necessary for her also to exert self-control.

"I promise you," she said softly. "When that day comes, Sam, it will be because my love for you has conquered my ambition."

The carriage stopped; his hands closed warmly over hers, but he said nothing.



## THE FLOCK IN THE MEADOW

BY MILDRED I. McNEAL

**I**S this not Palestine, the ancient country,  
And are not these the shepherds in the fields,  
Watching their flocks by night?

See how the quiet sheep come gathering  
In gentle, shadowy companies,  
Stirring often, like fields of innocent flowers,  
In the soft Orient wind,  
Appealing, one to another, silently  
Against the mysteries of the falling dark,  
Until the starry quiet comes over them  
And deepens, and the wind dies, and they sleep.

Upon us, lying in the fields in all the dim,  
Strange beauty of the night, there comes,  
Out of its time, like a lily in the dark,  
A little promise of dawn,  
Increasing wonderfully into the very west,  
Exquisitely growing and soon fulfilling itself  
In the full tranquil glory of a star  
That trembles with some unannounced joy.

Surely it is the ancient, sacred country,  
And the dark shepherds in their dewy cloaks,  
And the gray flocks, arisen, are looking forth  
For the nativity.

# DINNERS OF FIFTY YEARS AGO

*By Mrs. E. S. Bladen*



SERVING dinner in courses is comparatively a modern fashion, first introduced in diplomatic circles in Washington, D. C., and imitated from France. Up to the date of President Polk's administration the course dinner among Americans had made no further progress than that of serving fish and soup separately. Soup was regarded as such a foreign frippery that a note written by General Winfield Scott, in which he explained that he was "just sitting down to a hasty plate of soup," covered him with such ridicule as to materially contribute to his defeat as a candidate for the Presidency. Soup in the early days of the Republic was considered as food for invalids or poor people only; later, when the social splendors of the Court of the Empress Eugénie attracted rich Americans in flocks to Paris, French table manners and customs pushed the old English dinner-fashions to the wall. It is doubtful, however, if soup ever found a place on the dinner-table of the wealthy Maryland or Virginia planter, unless green turtle, which was really a stew, might be so called.

The object of an old-time dinner-party was to eat, whereas that of the course dinner is to delight the eye rather than the palate, and yet who will say that the sight of a well-filled dinner-table, where an array of silver covered dishes gives forth a bouquet of appetizing odors, fails to make an agreeable impression on all the senses.

In 1852, while still a school-girl, my father took me to Washington, where I was invited with him to dine by Mrs. Robert J. Walker. Mr. Walker was then Secretary of the Treasury. The hour was six P.M. There was no fish; soup was served in plates, no tureen being on the table, which was set with roasts at either end and intermediate covered dishes of vegetables and sauces. Decanters of wine were upon the table, and the colored man-servant handed around the dishes. When the substantials were removed the table-cloth was also lifted and the desserts served on the polished mahogany. In the centre of the table there was a china plateau with the bonbons then in style. These were wrapped in ornamental papers, which were beautifully hand-painted, but the contents were hard squares of colored sugar. These bonbons were designed for souvenirs, and the host complimented the ladies

by picking out what he considered especially pretty or appropriate for each. The desserts consisted of pastry, puddings, and fruit; fresh figs sliced in wine were especially delicious. Black coffee in small cups followed the dinner.

At this time I was also invited to dine by Mrs. William M. Meredith. Hon. William M. Meredith had been Secretary of the Treasury during the short administration of President Taylor. My father, Cornelius Darragh, was Attorney-General of Pennsylvania, with the power of appointing his whole three hundred deputies. He was a man of great influence and many friends wherever he went. The Meredith dinner was more elaborate, but on the same lines as the Walker dinner. One night at President Fillmore's reception, where Daniel Webster was the most striking figure in the Blue Room, he asked my father if he could not bring me informally to supper. The date was fixed, and at ten P.M. we arrived at the Webster mansion, which, like all Washington houses at that time, was very unpretentious. The supper consisted of roasted oysters and roasted potatoes, with the usual condiments. There were three or four great men present, and the point that most impressed me was that the brilliancy of their conversation and grace of their manners made me forget that I was a shy girl of fourteen.

My father was much occupied during the day, and Mr. Pendleton, of Virginia, used to bring his carriage and horses and drive me around to all the points of interest. He had been United States Minister to Peru, and had brought home with him several Peruvian boys to be educated. These and four nephews he had living with him were so lively that Mrs. Pendleton could not endure their noise, so Mr. Pendleton built a house for them across the street, but, notwithstanding these commodious quarters, the whole eight used to flock around Mrs. Pendleton out of school hours and follow her when she went out to walk.

But to return to the dinners of fifty years past. Three years later, when in Philadelphia with my father, I was invited to dine at the house of Hon. Richard Rush at his country-seat, Sydenham, where he resided with his daughters, the Misses Maria and Cassie Rush. Hon. Richard Rush had been United States Minister to England and France successively, and had also lived much in the former country as Special Agent or Commissioner of the United States. He was one of the Regents of the Smithsonian Institution. He was the eldest son of Benjamin Rush, who signed the Declaration of Independence. His whole dinner-service was of solid silver. There were covered dishes and meat dishes, tankards and stands for the decanters, also silver labels for the same. At one end of the table there was a saddle of venison, which Mr. Rush carved himself; at the other end a salmon, which was served by a man-servant in livery while the host was carving. Mr. Rush took wine with each one of his guests, and so far from it not being etiquette

for a guest to drink his or her own health, it was a terrible breach of good-manners not to sip from the glass at the same time as the host. Mr. Charles Ingersoll, Senior, took me in to that dinner. He was a stern and stately looking gentleman, but the versatile and enchanting conversation of Mr. Richard Rush soon relieved my embarrassment.

A year later the first exclusively ladies' dinner was given by Mrs. George Plitt to Miss Harriet Lane, niece and adopted daughter of Hon. James Buchanan, later President. At this time Mr. Buchanan was United States Minister to England and Miss Lane was going out to join him. This dinner in her honor was given on Mr. Plitt's birthday. There were twelve young ladies at the table with the host and hostess. There were oysters on the half-shell, a fine salmon, and the most delicious game and vegetables. Flowers decorated the centre of the table. There were ices, omelette soufflée, various desserts, and the usual decanters and light wines were served from the sideboard—positively no soup. The Plitts lived in a small house on Walnut Street below Eighth, but they were famous for their dinners.

The first course-dinner I was at in Philadelphia was at Mr. and Mrs. Richardson's, on Walnut Street below Nineteenth, a three-quarter house which stands there yet. Mr. Richardson was president of the Bank of North America. This was a young people's dinner, given by his son and daughter. The latter married the then British Consul, Mr. Kortright. It was there I first met Lucy Jones, who later became celebrated as a journalist as Lucy Hooper. Her father was immensely rich, but all his estates were in the South, and the War of the Rebellion ruined the finances of the family.

To return to the dinner. It was in every sense a superb scene. The table was a mass of flowers, glass, and silver. A great pyramid of poinsettias and japonicas rose almost to the ceiling. Every plate was an art-work, and all the courses were served. After oysters there was soup, then fish, then game of all kinds, terrapin, canvas-back ducks, etc. There was no wine on the table, champagne being served almost continuously. This was understood to be a French dinner, the gentlemen leaving the table at the same time as the ladies, immediately after the coffee.

I was at two balls and many receptions at Madam James Rush's Chestnut-Street mansion, but Mrs. Rush did not invite young girls to dinner-parties; in fact, in those days young girls had a perfect horror of dinner-parties, and it was only under some peculiar pressure of circumstances that they could be induced to go to one.

Perhaps the most elegant dinner-party of those days that I attended was given by Colonel William Croghan at his country-seat of Picnic, a few miles outside of the city of Pittsburg. Colonel Croghan was the father of Mrs. Captain Schenley, who gave the magnificent park which



bears her name to the city of Pittsburg. Her father used to spend much of his time with his daughter in London, and on his return was in the habit of giving a series of sumptuous dinners.

Eight o'clock was the dinner-hour, the number of guests twenty-four, the flowers and grapes the product of his own forcing houses. Three golden candelabras holding wax lights stood upon the table, which bore two great roasts and many silver covered dishes. He carved the great wild turkey, holding it on a carving-fork until all the meat was deftly sliced off. Two servants quickly filled the Sèvres china plates, each of which was embellished with the portrait of a reigning king or queen, while other servants in livery carried around the silver dishes with their savory contents. The guests sat at table three hours; this did not seem long, for the time was occupied with interest in the novelties, such as souvenirs for each guest, black Hamburg grapes when the snow lay on the ground, fragrant hot-house flowers, and flowers carved out of vegetables. The japonicas carved from turnips and beets compared favorably with the natural flowers. There were decanters on the table.

In those days the family dinner-table was as prodigally provided, though on a smaller scale, as that for invited guests. I never saw a meagre table when I was a child. As this is a record of modes of living a half century past, I take the picture of my maternal grandmother's household. She (Mrs. Dr. John Simpson) was born in Maryland. She married at the age of fifteen and moved to Southern Pennsylvania. After the death of her husband she resided in Pittsburg, and in the arrangement of her table always followed the old-time Maryland style. At one end there was always a roast ham, at the other end roast beef or fowl, often a saddle of venison; four vegetables, with sauces and condiments; always an elaborate dessert. There were always four cut-glass decanters on the dinner-table and many delicacies, but never soup. Breakfast and supper were also hearty meals. The first included broiled beefsteak, fresh fish, lamb chops, and various styles of hot cakes. Supper was more delicate,—fried chickens and waffles, game, sweet-breads, and peas. At breakfast there was often Welsh-rabbit; neither this nor ham was regarded as food, but merely as an appetizer. My paternal grandmother, who lived to be nearly ninety years of age, told me she had never failed to eat broiled beefsteak for her breakfast since her earliest recollection. Her father had been one of the first settlers, and she was the second white child born west of the Allegheny River; the first was Colonel William Robinson, who became the first president of the Pennsylvania Railroad. There were plenty of Malaga grapes and some oranges and lemons, with all kinds of dried fruits, which came to us from New Orleans, as did sugar, coffee, tea, etc., and there were great old warehouses where furs, buffalo robes and tongues, and all sorts of good things were stored.

Cincinnati was quite as sumptuously supplied as Pittsburg. In the fall of the year great flocks of turkeys were driven through the streets, as were thousands of pigs. Profusion of food was the characteristic of the first half of the last century. Servants were also abundant and efficient as cooks and laundresses, but there was probably not as much expected of them in the way of dress and culture as at the present day. There were no canned goods, no baking powders, no chemical extracts, —everything was prepared in the household.

All over the country there was the most generous living. I visited the Dandrighes, the Merricks, and the Hollingsworths of Maryland, the Hains, Schoenberghers, Neffs, Cassadys, and other families in Cincinnati as a school-girl, also at Governor Crittenden's in Lexington, Kentucky, with my father, and there was always the same profusion of table delicacies and elaborate and elegant table furnishing. At Governor Crittenden's an orchestra of colored musicians played during dinner.

But perhaps the best test of social embellishment was to be seen at Saratoga Springs, where the old United States Hotel assembled in the season the wealth and fashion of the country. The great dining-room, resplendent with mirrors and gilding, showed a dinner-table covered with silver dishes, while behind every two chairs a colored waiter man was stationed. The major-domo (as head waiter) stood at the head of the table with a baton in his hand. Orchestral music ushered in the guests, who took their seats at table; the major-domo raised his wand, and each waiter man advanced and stood back of the guests; at the second wave of the wand the waiters laid hands upon the dish-covers, and at the third wave every cover was lifted and laid upon small dumb-waiters, which other attendants carried away. Then the major-domo laid his hand upon his heart and bowed to the guests, the music struck up, and the waiters served the dishes.



## SUMMIT AND VALE

BY ALICE MOORE DUNBAR

THE light hangs over the mountain top,  
 But gray and misty the plain;  
 The sun's a-glow on eternal snow,  
 But down in the valley, the rain.

And life is so, the sun a-glow  
 On the mountains far, while the rain's below.

# THE ATTACK ON THE CHAISE

BEING AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF  
DICK RYDER, OTHERWISE GALLOPING DICK,  
SOMETIME GENTLEMAN OF THE ROAD

*By H. B. Marriott Watson*

*Author of "The Princess Zenia," "The Heart of Miranda," etc.*



I HAVE had ever an eye for a doxey, and in the course of my life have happened upon a variety of the sex such as falls to few men. Some have been fine ladies, brave with their lace and powder, and others again have descended upon a scale to the common kixsy-winsy; but in the end I would wager Polly Scarlet against any of the pack. Yet I will confess that there were some that have mightily tickled me, and one or two that went near to turn my head for their looks alone, to speak nothing of their state and grace. Not but what I have long ago learned the measure of beauty, and how far it may go—a man is a fool to surrender to that on the summons; yet will I not deny how greatly it stirs the midriff, and, coming home so sharp, does thus affect the bearing of us all. Madam or Miss, there was no handsomer lady in town on that summer night when I encountered her than Sir Philip Caswell's ward, and 'twas that, I'll be bound, influenced me in my behavior subsequently. Nevertheless, I vow I did not care two straws for the pretty puss in my heart.

'Twas after a long evening at a gaming-house in Marylebone that I was returning on my two legs through the fields for Soho. I was in a pleasant temper, having filled my pockets with King's pictures, and I had drunk nothing save a bottle or so of good burgundy since dinner. The hour, indeed, was past midnight, and I was casting up the chances to find supper at the Pack Horse or the Golden Eagle or some other house known to me. "Well," says I, as I came out in the hedgerows, "'tis nearly one, and rip me if I do not sup and lie abed by two, and live virtuous," for I was pleased with what I was carrying and loath to lose it. A bird was calling in a flutter from the hedge, and just upon that another sound came to my ears, and on the still air arose the clamor of swords in engagement. This was nothing to me, for I am not used to intermeddle in such affairs as nocturnal brawls, unless, indeed, I am gone in liquor, as sometimes happens, or am led off by

troublesome company. But to the sounds of the fight succeeded the voice of a woman, crying, but not very loudly, for help. This, as you may believe, was upon another footing, for there was never a petticoat that appealed to Dick Ryder in her trouble in vain, as my records will prove on any road in England. So off I set at a run in the direction of the sounds, which seemed to stream out of the entrance to Windmill Street. The houses here were black and silent (it being so late), and there was no sign of any interest on the part of the inhabitants of the quarter. But the moon, which had been under a scurry of clouds, struck out of her shelter and showed me plain the scene of the struggle. There, in the roadway, stood the body of a chaise, with two trampling horses, while about it was a melly of figures, two of which were engaged in hammer-and-tongs upon each other. It was not long ere I had seized the situation and interpreted it properly, and, whipping out my blade, I made no ado about falling on the assailants of the chaise. 'Twas easy to make out who these were, inasmuch as one of the men wore a mask across his eyes. I ran upon him and those behind him, while I was aware of the woman's cry that still issued out of the chaise but now suddenly stopped.

"Stand aside, damn ye," says the man in the mask on perceiving me. "Would you interfere with an honest duello?"

"Rip me," says I, "call you this duello with bravoes behind and a lady afore? Rot me if I split not your liver for it!"

At that I lunged, but on that same instant the scum about him came at me from the side, so that I was forced to keep my eyes and weapon in two places. The man in the mask had not ceased to ply his point on the gentleman whom I took to be the owner of the chaise; and this seemed a sturdy, obstinate fellow enough, for he puffed and grunted hard at my ear, but fought like any dragoon. One of those that came at me I winged in the arm, and, swiftly dodging behind my ally, I came upon the masked man and ran him through the elbow without advertisement. He dropped his arm with an oath, and, as he did so, the mask fell from his face, which showed clear and clean in the moonlight. But that was no sooner done that the big man by me lurched and staggered, so that it was plain he had taken something in his vitals. Well, here was I now all alone with that evil pack about me, pressing on me like birds of prey, for although I had pinked one and his master, there were two more able-bodied culleys left, to say nothing of the master himself, whose wound, to judge from his language, was more painful than serious. I am quick at a resolve, and know when to withdraw from in front of odds. There was a man fallen wounded, and maybe dead, and no signs of the watch; while from the chaise peered, as I caught a glimpse, a white and terrified face in the moonlight. The coachman, it was clear, had taken to his

heels already, and the horses stood, champing and trembling and swaying in their alarm at the noises. What does I, then, as there was a little lull in the fray and the others temporarily drew off, but stoop and lift the big man from the ground, and bundle him rapidly into the chaise. Bang goes the door, and, leaping to the coachman's seat, I lashed the horses with the flat of my blade. They started in a panic, and the chaise went plunging and rocking down the narrow way.

This fetched me into King Street, and, in fear of a pursuit, I stood up and banged at the nags so that I had them bumping at a gallop round into the Oxford Road and on the way for Tyburn. When we had run some distance I brought 'em to with an effort, and, hearing no noise of the enemy, descended and opened the door of the chaise. The moon shone sufficiently for me to make out the humped body of the man I had thrust in so roughly, and opposite, white, shrinking, and in an evident state of terror and agitation, a mighty handsome and engaging Miss that stared at me helplessly.

"Is—he dead?" she asked hoarsely.

"Faith, Miss," says I, "I cannot say. Yet I hope not. He's not for worms, I'll warrant. Best get him home and have a surgeon fetched; and if you'll acquaint me with the house, I will make so bold as to take you myself."

She waited a moment and then spoke, giving a street in St. James's, at which I made her a congé and got upon the box again. I am better astride a nag than with a whip in my hand, and, moreover, the night was now pretty dark, yet 'twas not long ere we had reached the house, and, the bell rung and the servants called, the fat gentleman was got in safely enough. Upon that someone flies for the surgeon, and there was I all alone with the lady, and not loath to clap my peepers on her more nearly. She moved with a style, but had a fearful air, yet it was her face that took me most. She was young and slender and nothing too tall—large-eyed and round of limb, and with a mouth that budded in repose and opened like a flower in speech. But she was very still and white just then.

"I am Sir Philip Caswell's ward, sir," she says very tremulously, "and we are much beholden to you."

"I am honored, Madam," said I, with a congé again, "to have been of some small service to you."

"The scoundrels fell upon us by Windmill Street upon our way home," she continued with a pretty shudder. "Sir Philip stepped out to face them. I begged he would not, but he is very obstinate."

"Faith, Miss, what could he do less?" said I.

"We might have whipped up and so escaped them," says she, with an air of some petulance now, "but that our cowardly man took to his heels and left us helpless."

As she spoke she eyed me with more coldness, I thought, than the occasion warranted, for all she was so shook, and though she had made me her compliments quite prettily, she had spoken as if she were thinking of something else, which, as you will conceive, nettled me not a little. It was as if she wished me away, for she fell silent and cast glances at the chamber clock that hung at the wall. But seeing I had been at the pains for her and the old fat man, why, says I to myself, rip me if I will go like any discharged lackey. I will tire her out, says I, and let Beauty yawn or pay in gratitude. So I sat on in the saloon, making conversation as it seemed fit to me to serve one of her class and age. No doubt she was tired, for the hour was about two in the morning, yet her pretty yawns, which she feigned to cover with her hands, vexed me. But, indeed, I might have gone forth and left here there and then for very shame, as would have been natural, had it not been that an excuse came to aid me in a message from Sir Philip, who had recovered under the attentions of the surgeon. He had learned, it seemed, that his rescuer was in the house, and begged that he might be allowed to thank him in person presently. This set me in feather, but Miss in the sulks, as I thought, which maddened me the more that the hussy should prove so ungrateful, particularly at a time when she should be showing concern at her adventure or, at least, grief for her guardian. Yet as I watched her, perish me but she charmed me with her petulant prettiness the more. Such a dainty head and a mouth, so pert and alluring, I had never yet clapped eyes on, which I say for all that followed.

There, then, were we set awaiting Sir Philip, in the big chamber, she yawning without disguise, and me racking my wits to attract her. I'll warrant she must have taken an idea of me as a buck of town, although she feigned coldness then. I spoke of the play and the Court, of both of which I knew secrets, and I talked on a level proper to the sex.

"D'ye not love the play, Miss?" says I.

"Lard, it is pretty well," says she, and covered up a yawn with ostentation.

"I doubt not but you have seen 'Love in a Tub'? said I, for I would not be beat by her impudence.

"Maybe," says she; "I have a poor memory."

"There was one played in it t'other day like to you, Miss," said I with significance, thinking to rouse her.

She lifted her eyebrows. "Well, indeed," says she indifferently.

"As handsome as I might wish to see—so she was," said I, persisting.

"Why, do you say so?" cries Miss. "What a fortunate lady!" and stifles another yawn.

"You favor her, Miss," says I, giving her an eye.

"Lard, I favor none, sir," said she tartly. "I am cross like two sticks that could beat myself," and ere I could find a word in retort she had gone from the room.

If I had followed my first temper, I would have marched from the house forthright, being sore to be so used by the minx; but I will admit she had a fascination for me, and wherein my teeth are set there I hold; so that I paced the chamber once or twice and "Damme," says I angrily, "I will make the little cockatrice sing another tune afore I've done."

And no sooner was I come to this conclusion than the door at the foot of the room opened, and in walks an elegant gentleman. The sound made me turn, and I watched him till he came into the light of the candles, when I cried out sharply—for the face was no other than that which had lain behind the mask in that nocturnal attack. I took some steps across the room and halted by him, so that he might see me as clearly as I saw him.

"Well, sir," says I, "I'll make bold to say you recognize me," for I was amazed and disordered by his remarkable appearance in that house.

He looked me up and down. "Not the least in the world," says he coolly, and arranged some nice point of his sleeves. "Who the Devil may you be?"

"Rip me," says I angrily, "the question is not that so much as who be you and what audacity brings you here? But if you want it, you shall have it. My name is Ryder."

He paused again before he replied to me, and there was no manner of irritation in his voice, but merely languor.

"Well, Mr. Ryder, one good turn deserves another. So, my name is York, and I am a friend of Sir Philip Caswell."

"What!" said I, mightily taken aback at this rejoinder, as you may suppose; then I laughed, "'Sblood," I said, "'tis a pretty demonstration of friendship to be for striking your bodkin in someone's belly, as you was an hour ago, you rogue."

York's eyebrows lifted at this, but I will admit he had a fine command of himself which took my admiration, toad as he was. He was a healthy, ruddy man, of looks not displeasing

"Indeed," says he to me; "why, here is news. Have we Simon Bedlam here, Madam?" and he turned to Miss, who had entered at the moment. He bowed very low to her, and the color sprang in her face.

"Mr. York!" she cried in a fluttered way.

"Why, you did not look for me so late, Madam," says he pleasantly.

"But I spied lights and thought maybe Sir Philip was at his cards

and would give me welcome, and the door was open. But I find only," he concluded, with an indifferent glance on me, "a merry-andrew who talks brimstone and looks daggers."

"Sir Philip has been attacked," stammered Miss; "the surgeon has just left him."

"'Tis not serious, I trust?" says the fellow gravely, and when she had faltered out her negative continued, very polite, "Footpads, I doubt not. The streets are abominable in these days, and the watch is ever asleep."

But that was too much for me, and I burst forth:

"Footpads!" said I. "Hear him, Miss. Why, damme, 'twas the dungfork himself. The mask fell from his face as he fought me and I saw him plain. I would have you and Sir Philip know what manner of man this is who calls himself friend."

"Softly, softly, you crow loud," said he, as impudent as ever and smiling softly. "Who, d'ye suppose, would credit this cock-and-bull story? I profess I know none. Would you, Madam?" he asked, turning suddenly on the girl.

She hesitated ever so little and showed some confusion.

"I—I think the gentleman mistook," said she; "I cannot credit such a story. 'Tis monstrous!"

"Why, Miss," said I, "'tis true as I am a living man. And as for this muckrake here, why, I will prove it on his skin, if he denies it," and out I whipped my iron, ready for an onfall. But it seemed that he would not budge, and smiled as indifferent as ever. And Miss too, though she showed no color, regained her composure, and says she firmly:

"'Tis monstrous! I cannot believe it. This gentleman is a friend to me and Sir Philip. He is on terms of intimacy. Lard, sir, you surprise me to make such rash statements. Your eyes deceived you, or the dark."

The man that called himself York nodded impudently. "That is it, Madam," he says, "'twas his eyes, no doubt, and the blinking moon. This gentleman, whom I have not the honor of knowing, is doubtless much excited by the event and must be excused. Otherwise"—he shrugged his shoulders significantly. "I am honored by the resemblance he detects, and, my faith, I shall be seeing my double kick the Triple Beam—so I shall, and damn him for a rogue."

But you may guess that this was too much for me—to stand there quiet and see the culley talk so suave and false, and the girl so credulous, and perilling herself and the house by blind faith in such a villain. Upon his features, moreover, there was a faint grin that spread and counterfeited civility, almost, as it were, a leer, and that maddened me, so that I spoke out pretty hotly:



"'Tis very true what you say, sir," said I, "and there was no witness of what happened save me and old Oliver, the moon. And so the law shall go free of you. Indeed, I have no particular fancy for the law myself. But damme, sir," says I, "I detect a mighty resemblance in you to a wheedler that cheated me at dice this night, and rip me if I will not run you through the midriff for it!"

There was my point towards him, with that little menacing twist of my wrist such as has served me often in good stead, and he must ha' seen what sort of kidney he had to deal with; for he gazed at me in surprise, laughed slightly, and made protest with his shoulders, exhibiting some discomposure.

"I would remind you, sir," said he, "that there is a lady here."

"Damme," says I, "but she will not be outside, then, and thither you shall go!"

York frowned at this, and stood for a moment as though he was at a loss for answer. I was not to be put down by a naughty fop like him, with his punctilios, more especially as I was acting in the interests of the lady, so I pressed him with the naked blade.

"Come," says I, "let's see your tricks out-of-doors."

But at that a voice broke in and stayed me, coming from the door behind.

"Pray, sir," says this very level and quiet voice, "what may this scene mean?"

Round I whipped, and there on the threshold of the room was the tall, big man that had fought by me, Sir Philip himself, with his arm in a bandage, a cap on his iron-gray hair, and on his face a stern, commanding expression. Out of the tail of my eye I saw Miss shrunk back against the wall in a posture of alarm. But York was no whit abashed; he saluted most ceremoniously.

"Good-evening, Sir Philip," said he, "your servant. You are come in time—perish me, in the very nick! Here's a most impudent and amazing case," and he cocks his finger at me. "I have never heard of a more shameless, audacious fellow. Damme, it has made me laugh—so impudent is it!"

"I should like to know what it is, Mr. York, so that I maybe might share the jest," says Sir Philip with some dryness of tone.

"Why, naturally," returned t'other cheerfully, "having had the good fortune to rescue you and your ward from a pack of villains, cutpurses, or worse, what is my surprise to find installed in your house the very chief of the villains, as impudent as you please. Faith, if it were not so grave 'twould tickle me still."

I must admit that the fellow took me aback, and for all I was furious, I could not but admire his cool bearing and ready wit. Sir Philip stared at me with a black frown, for I could find nothing for

the moment to counter this monstrous brazen face, but at last I broke out, only with an oath, for sure—so amiss was I.

"You damned rogue!" said I.

But York goes on as calm as ever. "'Twould be a good thing, sir," says he, looking at me with a kind of a wondering interest, "if perhaps the watch were called; for he is a man that can use a weapon, as your arm bears witness, and, indeed, my own skin too," with which he stroked his elbow gently. Sir Philip had come forward and now began in a formidable voice of anger.

"What!" he cries to me, "you are the ruffian——"

But I was not going to put up meekly under this, and broke out myself.

"Rip me," said I, "if I have ever heard or seen the like! Why, yonder stands the fellow that was in the assault on your carriage, and 'twas me, Dick Ryder, that thrust him through the elbow as he fell on you."

Sir Philip's eyes went from one to t'other of us under his bent black brows, but York's eyebrows were lifted in a feint of amazement.

"Why, Sir Philip," said he, "you will see from this how an excess of impudence may move a man. It may be that he is drunk that he plays so wildly. You have known me long. Sure, I needn't speak in my own behalf to so preposterous a charge," and dropped silent with a grand air.

"I have known you long, as you say, sir," said Sir Philip slowly, "and I have known you to be a suitor for my ward's hand."

"I have always had that honor," said York with a bow towards Miss, "which, unhappily, you have not seen fit to allow me so far. Yet if my witness is wanted, why, here is your ward herself."

At that Sir Philip turned, as though reminded.

"Lydia," said he, "what is the truth of this story? We were attacked and rescued. Was this gentleman in the assault?" and he pointed at me.

Miss's eyes fell; she was fluttered and her bosom went fast; and there flashed, I'll swear, a glance from York.

"Indeed, sir," she faltered, "I could not say. The men were masked."

"Aye, so they were," said he, considering.

"'Twas from this one's face that I took the cover," puts in York pertly.

"But certain it is that Mr. York rescued us," went on Miss in a faint voice.

At that news I could have reeled under the words, so little was I ripe for them, and so unsuspecting of her.

"Why," said I, opening my mouth and stuttering,—“why, 'twas I

drove off the pack and fetched the chaise home. 'Twas I lifted you in and took the reins. The Lord deliver me from this wicked puss!"

Sir Philip threw up his sword arm with a gesture of black wrath.

"'Tis plain," said he, "that one here is a villainous rogue, and if we have not always agreed, Mr. York, at least I cannot think you that."

Miss leaned against the wall, white and trembling, and I gave her a congé, very deep and ironical. Truth to say, as soon as I had recovered I had, after my habit, begun to ply my wits pretty sharply, and already I had taken a notion of how things stood between the two. Moreover, I was not done with yet, and I cast about to be even with the pair. Sir Philip, it seemed, was hostile to the addresses of this York; and as patently Miss herself was not. The attack, then, must have been part of a plan to gain Mrs. Lydia's person, to which she was herself privy. What does I, then, but step in and interfere with the pretty plot? This was why she bore me no good-will, no doubt.

"Well," says I, with the congé, "I cannot contest a lady's word, be she Poll or Moll. Let the gentleman have his way."

Sir Philip without more ado turned to him.

"Mr. York," said he civilly, "I beg your pardon for my coldness, which, indeed, had nothing of suspicion. But you must remember that we have never quite agreed. I hope that will mend. I remain greatly in your debt, and I trust you will be good enough to add to my obligations by keeping this man secure until my return. I will have the watch fetched at once."

"Nothing will give me greater satisfaction, sir," says the rogue cheerfully, and off goes Sir Philip with his black, portentous face, leaving us three there together again. As for me, I had made up my mind and was feeling my way to some action; but says York, looking on me pleasantly:

"Egad, you're in a ticklish case. Stap me, you've run your head into a noose! Now why the devil did you yield that way? I had looked for a good, round fight, as good, egad, as we had this evening. And I had begun to have my fears too—stap me I did!"

But I paid him no heed then, for I will confess that I was all eyes for Mrs. Lydia, whose face was very piteous. She was trembling violently and looked out of tragic lids, and, damme, it came upon me like a flash that she was no party to the lie herself, but had spoke in fear of that bully. Indeed, it may be that she took a distaste of him, as it were, from that scene which began to show from that minute. How else can be explained what ensued?

"You had better go, sir," said she at last in a whisper.

"Aye, that's true," says York, nodding. "I had not thought of that. You had better go. The watch will be fetched."

He looked so comfortable and so friendly, rather than what he was at heart, that my gorge rose of a sudden.

"I will be damned if I go!" says I. "If I must hang, I must hang."

Miss started. "Oh!" she cried, and "You must go, oh, you must go, sir! Fly, fly while there is time!"

Here were the two culprits in unison for my withdrawal, which would fetch them out of a scrape, yet how far the girl was involved in the business I had not yet determined. So I pushed her further, as, indeed, I had the right. I folded my arms.

"I am waiting my reward, Madam," I said,—“something in recognition of my service in behalf of yourself and Sir Philip.”

But at this she fell into a greater exhibition of distress, imploring me to go, and flitting in agitation 'twixt me and the door, on which she kept anxious watch. Well, thought I, if here's not innocence, at least she is in a pickle enough, and I believe I would ha' gone had it not been for York, whose bearing annoyed me. Besides, I wanted to see how far Miss would venture, and if her resolution to veil the truth would stand out against the watch and a poor victim haled to prison. Not that I wanted the watch or the law about me nearer than was necessary for sundry reasons, but I can always trust to my own ingenuity and sword if it comes to the pinch. So I listened to her deafly and made no sign to go.

"Let him be, Lydia," says York presently, "he is an obstinate fellow, and, faith, deserves his fate. Let him hang. I'll warrant it must have come to that some day."

But this turns me on him, and I whipped out my blade again in a fury at his insolence; only Mrs. Lydia intervened, and, her face very pale, put a hand on my arm.

"Oh sir," says she, very low of voice, but clear and earnest for all that, "I beg you will not suffer further harm to come to-night. Indeed, but I am ashamed to look you in the face. I will not excuse myself, I will offer no apologies, yet maybe you would not think too hardly of me if you knew more. My guardian keeps me close. He stands in my way and will not allow me what is allowed all women. I am not a school-girl, sir. I am grown a height," and she raised herself to her full stature. "Surely I may have that liberty to command, go, and choose where I will, and whom. Sir, he has sought to make himself all the law to me," she cries with heaving bosom; "and as for his hurt, God knows I did not wish it, and was not privy to it," and she cast a glance, as I thought of scorn and reproach, at her lover. The eloquence of this attitude struck me to the reins, tender as I was to the wounds of women, though not to be frustrated or deceived by vain pretences.

"He is a hog," says I,—“a pig of a man—to interfere with you, Madam.”

But here spoke York, when he had better have held his tongue, yet he was impossible:

"Faith, child," he said lightly, "you have touched him there. But stop and go no further. Let it work."

"I will go on," she cried, stamping her foot and turning on him. "I will tell all to this gentleman, all that should be told; for it is his due and meed—a small recompense for the unworthy usage he has had. You have heard him, sir," she says, "and, indeed, your eyes have been witness to his deeds and what he is. My guardian came between us and denied us. And this was *his* plan—to snatch me away by violence while I stood passive, not refusing nor accepting." She wrung her hands in a transport of distress. "I—I was wild—I did madly; yet, sir, I would not have you judge me by that. See, it has all ended in trouble, nothing but trouble, and I have gained nothing for myself but shame."

She paused upon the edge of tears, as I could see pretty plain, and says I bluntly, "You were misled, and by them that should not," and I scowled at York where he stood. But York says nothing, merely lifting his shoulders, and being content, no doubt, to let Miss deal with the situation. She sank her face in her hands, which moved me strangely, for she had a helpless look.

"If I have misjudged, sir, and been mistook," she said, "can you blame me if I would bury that shame and not have it flaunted in my face?"

"Not I, Madam," said I; "I would I might help you, troth I do."

"You can," she cried, sparkling shyly and eagerly upon me.

"Why——" says I.

"If you will go, sir, there will be no trouble, no inquiry, and no law will be set in motion. 'Twill die a quiet death, and nothing will be dugged up against me. I shall not have to tell the truth, as I shall have else," she cried, her lips parted in her fever, her eyes burning with a wild zeal.

York uttered a sound, but I was silent.

"Oh sir," she pleaded.

"Why," I said with a laugh, "it seems I must condone wounds, abduction, and all."

"'Tis on me the brunt will fall—the shame and scandal," she urged, and, looking in her pretty face, damme, I could resist no longer, for I'll swear she was genuine, and had been misled by that muckrake.

"I will go," says I, and then of a sudden remembered. "But how am I to escape?" says I.

"By the window," she said, pointing to it with animation.

"Why, to be sure," says I slowly, for I was taken with a notion; "but there is this gentleman, who is my guard."

"Oh!" says she archly, "I think your sword is better than his, and he will not stay you."

"True," says I. "But 'tis best to be prudent and to avoid Sir

Philip's suspicions. He must have some marks of a struggle. Either I must leave him with a wound or senseless, or gagged and bound, or maybe suspicion will come to rest on you, Madam."

Her brows were bent in a little frown. "That is true," she said, and turned to York, whose face for the first time, as I could see, wore a look of discomposure.

"He must be bound and gagged," says I, shaking my head.

"Ye—es," she says hesitatingly.

Whereupon I went forward to the fellow, who gnawed his lip and fidgeted. He looked at Mrs. Lydia as if about to speak, and then shot an angry glance at me, put paused.

"Oh, very well," says he at last with a grin, "but pray make haste, or you will be surprised in the middle of your job," and he had the air of yielding himself with good-humor. But I knew what must be his chagrin, though I admired him for his manner. He would have done pretty well on the road if he could have put by his scurvy way with women. Yet I was not for letting him off after what he had done, so, withdrawing the cords from the window-curtains, I tied him pretty quickly in a fast enough bundle. But when, his arms being lashed behind, I approached with a wedge of wood, York cried out in protest.

"Damme, I'll have none of that!" said he.

"He must be gagged," says I to the lady, appealing to her. She hesitated, and, looking on him, appeared to take pity, or maybe she was afraid of him.

"Perhaps it is not necessary," she said.

"Why, look ye, Madam," said I earnestly, "we must convince Sir Philip of our good faith, else he will smell out this trickery, and all our pains be thrown away."

She made no answer, and with the wedge I moved a step nearer to York, who grimaced and cried out with an oath,—

"May I be——"

But ere he could get it forth I had it between his teeth, and with my knee in his wind threw him in a heap upon the floor. Mrs. Lydia looked on with open eyes and with an air of uncertainty. What she would have said I know not, but at that moment there was a sound without the door and she broke out.

"Go! go!" she cried, running to me. "You can go now in safety."

"Yes, 'tis time I was gone if I am to keep the bargain," said I, looking with a grin on York, who was wriggling on the floor and striving to get his mouth free.

I gave Miss a congé and backed to the window. "If you will credit me, Madam," says I, "you will think twice ere you take up with York there."

"I know, I know," says she eagerly, for she was terrified of the sounds outside. "I will be wise, I promise you."

Her skirts swung against me, and that touch on my arm sent through me an amazing thrill, so that, beholding her so vastly handsome and passionate at my elbow, my blood fired at the sight.

"Madam," said I, very grave, "I had thought to do you some good, and that privilege would have been my reward. But I find myself only to have plunged you in embarrassments, for which may I be whipped! What get I for my pains, then? Why, nothing; not even the private consolation to have relieved you; and in this escape what touches me is not so much the ignominy, as the deprivation of these eyes of one they would have dwelled on always."

'Twas not ill phrased, as you will admit, and I got it off with unction, her face being so close to me, and devilish enticing. The sounds were not now audible, and I was at the window, so that I suppose she had forgot her tremors. A demure look crept in her face under my boldness, and says she softly,—

"What would you have me do?"

"Oh Madam," said I, turning on her, "look up, look up, I pray you, and I'll warrant you'll read me as clear as a book."

"I cannot guess, sir," says she, looking up with her innocent eyes all the same, while from the floor there was a choking sound, which, maybe, was the dust in York's nostrils. Miss looked round.

"We are keeping Mr. York in an uncomfortable position," says she sweetly. "'Tis not a pleasant posture to lie in."

"Faith," said I boldly, "I would lie so all night if I might get what I want now."

"What is it you want?" says she, opening her eyes in wonder.

"Why, what I will take, and suffer all risks," says I of a sudden. With which I put my arm about her swiftly and carried her face to mine. Mrs. Lydia called out "Oh!" and the gag was shaken with uncouth, unintelligible sounds. A noise streamed out of the hall.

"Go! go!" cries she, pink of face and sparkling, and seeing my time was come I turned and went, leaving the gag still spluttering in the corner.



## FIDELITY

BY EDWARD WILBUR MASON

CAN I be friends with that so altered *you*,  
And to your former friendly self keep true?

# A MUSICAL GAME

*By Philip H. Goeppe*

*Author of "Symphonies and their Meaning," etc.*



THE problem of titles in music has been discussed into a thoroughly muddled state. One trouble is, you are led astray into the most charming by-paths, where you survey, in lost wonder, the boundaries of the art. Mendelssohn's saying, that music is more definite than prose, comes to disturb from the root all the premises of what we are to define in our language of tones or of words.

Titles in music made a great to-do—almost a revolution—when they first appeared, early in the last century. Music is like the good old party of the people: though founded on a sound base, it is most prone to delusions and heresies. There is an amusing list of these musical fads and furores of a dim past. There was no reason to stop anywhere in the new deluge of "composition;" one of the last enterprises was the setting of all the "Acts of the Apostles."

Another curious point of musical history was the rage of the Faux Bourdon, the false bass. The usual chord, it was found, would not move in parallel lines of all the voices. At any rate, a century or so of that sort of "harmony" exhausted the delights that Hucbald the monk tells us he found in this hideous practice. But, set the chord in its first inversion, and all the friction of sound is gone from the parallel motion; the voices move sweetly in an eternal rut, where there is no more creative thought than in the cooing of a babe. To this day the figure is used within limits; Beethoven has it as a subject in a sonata. But in the dear old age of first discoveries of elemental things it was the new-found, natural law of voice-progression. Start your chord of the sixth and third, and keep moving it ad libitum anywhere you please; the harmony was ever perfect. Of course, you had no true bass; but that didn't matter as long as you did not stop. Then, it gave too the simplest recipe for harmonizing tunes. The Church finally forbade the practice in pure self-defence against the general demoralization. It all shows the child-like proneness to error in art, and the quaint desire for regular, thought-saving routine, just as alchemy would spare the toil of mining gold.

The rage for titles in music led to a quest for a kind of hidden,



graphic translation of events into the tonal language. Programme music is the name for the disease. It is one of the subtlest dangers that has beset the art. Even Bach fell a victim when he wrote a crowing cock in his setting of the "Passion." Beethoven has the calls of the quail, the cuckoo, and the nightingale, and literal rain and thunder, in the picture of his "Pastoral Symphony."

But there is a real use of titles. Schumann came nearest the true sense when he confessed that he wrote the name *after* the music. Now hear the good Philistine laugh! "Like the boy, forsooth, who discovers, when the picture is done, whether he has drawn a cow or a pig." Well, it isn't like that at all. The fact is, music is neither a graphic art nor a guessing-match; whether it is too high or too low need not be broached. The first point is that the subject of music is never important. So a great painting must always be independent of its title. The beauty is all, unless you want to go deeper for the feeling that the poet utters, all unwitting, because it possesses him altogether.

The capacity of music for emotional burden can be defined or refined in limited association. To be sure, there is no external cocksure guaranty of absolute relevance,—that lies in the quality of sincerity that is always clear enough. Within very large spheres there is a plenty of inspiration. So Raff sat him down to symphonies on "The Forest" or "Winter;" and there is no break in the perennial charm of situation, though there is, somehow, with the gain of definite sense a certain loss of breadth and power.

But Schumann's way was the better. Free from the fetters of predetermined subject, he could let the feeling prompt and the figures grow without an anxious eye to the title. The consciousness of a mastering idea will often break on the tonal poet just after the white heat of absorbed design. In a certain way it is quite right and fair for the composer to paint his musical picture and then see what it is. Why not? If it is beautiful, and therefore true, it is surely worth doing, and sounds as sweet by one name as another.

And there we return to the truth that is ever slipping out of ken: the name is not important; it really doesn't count. It is not like a statute, or a book on mathematics, that must answer its title. Why, even a poem or a romance may be misnamed without a real loss.

The true duty of the musical title is to give the sense of controlling mood or idea that the poet himself has discovered. If the "meaning" is not essential, neither, on the other hand, must the listener be denied any clew that the poet may give. All the time spent in puzzling is wasted, is a loss of musical enjoyment.

But we have put our claim for the graphic power of music at the very lowest, as a safe discouragement of definite translation. In truth, it may be, often, more than this touch of postscript. The power of

mimicry may find a subtle medium in tones. This was a trait of Schumann, even in boyhood. The philosophic formula for the true degree of tonal definition is not within reach. There are, of course, mere physical qualities—of speed or loudness—that may have their rough association. The more external the correspondence, the less interesting is the music. It is in the invisible sign-manual that lies the greatest charm, and, at the same time, a surety of tense, emotional conception. Thus in Schumann's "Children's Scenes," "Blind Man's Buff" is most easily caught in the quick, darting figure; but it is of all the least satisfying. "Lonely Flowers" in the "Forest Scenes" has an exquisite symbolism in the sweetly twining course of the melodies. The "Inn" has nothing of outer description; but the jolly rollicking, the freedom from pensive hue, leave the listener as much delighted with the sure sense of his discovery as the actual wanderer in the woods.

It is, of course, in the series of such scenes or events that each is reinforced by contrast with the other. Nothing could be more opposite than the "Haunted Spot" and the "Inn," and it is the recoil from one that makes the other clear.

All this has suggested a game which is heartily commended and has been well tested. A good pianist, who knows more than his mere notes, plays to a group of friends the scenes that are to be guessed. But the first point is a warning. Never try to find the sense of music without some clew. It would be utterly vain to make a blind guess at the "meaning" that the composer has put in a title, for the title is there for the very purpose of helping and enlightening.

The main direction, then, is that the player read to his listeners some half-dozen titles, naming, or not, the composer, as he elects. Each listener thereupon makes a list for himself in the order given. The player then plays the compositions in a different order, which he takes care not to make known, and the listeners write opposite their titles the number of each composition as (they think) it was played. When the playing is finished the guesses are read out in turn.

The game can be made as difficult as one pleases by taking a longer list.

The danger is the diversion from a pure musical enjoyment to an anxious hunt for hidden symbols. All this is much diminished by reading the answers beforehand, leaving the order alone uncertain. What might have been a guessing-match is thus a mere quest of correspondences.

Among the compositions especially fitted for the game are Schumann's "Children's Scenes," "Forest Scenes," and "Carnaval." There is a host of single, entitled pieces by Schumann and others. The true value of the game would lie in a quickened zest for much of the best poetry in the art.

## LYRICS OF LOVE AND SORROW

BY PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR

### I.

THE light was on the golden sands,  
A glimmer on the sea;  
My soul spoke clearly to thy soul,  
Thy spirit answered me.

Since then the light that gilds the sands  
And glimmers on the sea,  
But vainly struggles to reflect  
The radiant soul of thee.

### II.

The sea speaks to me of you  
All the day long;  
Still as I sit by its side  
You are its song.

The sea sings to me of you  
Loud on the reef;  
Always it moans as it sings,  
Voicing my grief.

### III.

My dear love died last night,  
Shall I clothe her in white?  
My passionate love is dead,  
Shall I robe her in red?  
But nay, she was all untrue,  
She shall not go dressed in blue;  
Still, my desolate love was brave,  
Unrobed, let her go to her grave.

### IV.

There are brilliant heights of sorrow  
That only the few may know,  
And the lesser woes of the world, like waves,  
Break noiselessly far below.

I hold for my own possessing  
A mount that is lone and still,  
The great high place of a hopeless grief,  
And I call it my "Heart-break Hill."  
And once on a winter's midnight  
I found its highest crown,  
And there in the gloom, my soul and I,  
Weeping, we sat us down.

But now when I seek that summit  
We are two ghosts that go,  
Only two shades of a thing that died,  
Once in the long ago.  
So I sit me down in the silence,  
And say to my soul, "Be still,"  
So the world may not know we died that night,  
From weeping on "Heart-break Hill."

# CINDERELLA'S SISTERS

*By E. Ayrton*



**O**LD Mrs. Marsden and the three Misses Marsden were sitting in the little Bayswater drawing-room, awaiting Joan Elliot's arrival.

"I expect she'll be awfully dowdy, after being buried in the country all her life," giggled Miss Carrie.

"Yes, she'll find us rather gay, won't she?" tittered Miss Florence, who was a fainter copy of her elder sister.

Miss Mary was silent. Presently she asked, "Did the man see to the springs of the spare-room mattress, mamma?"

"Oh, you dreadfully sensible thing!" Miss Carrie gave a little shriek. "Isn't she quite too dreadfully sensible? You can sit and talk about mattresses when a new cousin, whom we've none of us ever seen, is coming to stay for a month! Why, Florrie and I are so excited we don't know what to do. You're really getting into a regular old maid."

What Miss Carrie said was quite true—Mary was becoming an old maid. The family Bible recorded her age, which was thirty-nine, and a discreet blank after her name indicated her single condition. Had you been curious enough to look farther, you might have seen that Miss Carrie and Miss Florrie possessed prior claims to the title.

At this moment a cab drew up. "Come along, girls," cried Miss Carrie, running out into the hall. She opened the front door and saw a tall young figure standing outside. "Oh my dear girl," she exclaimed, "you must be half frozen, you poor, dear thing!" Then she embraced Joan impulsively, and, taking hold of her arm, pulled her forward.

Joan Elliot looked a trifle dazed as she came into the brightly lit drawing-room. It may have been the sudden warmth and light, or perhaps she had been rather overwhelmed by the effusiveness of her cousin's welcome. Her glance was almost obviously surprised as it rested on Carrie and Florrie. She also knew the information contained in the family Bible. "It must be a mistake, they're quite girls," she thought, and then she saw that their pale eyes had a curiously tired look. Their necks and hands too were many years older than their trim little figures and undeveloped conversation. "They're not made up young or anything, but I don't like anachronisms," Joan felt vaguely.

"I'm so glad you've come," Miss Carrie was babbling, "and that the horrid hatchet is buried at last. That's my little joke, you know, and, of course, it wasn't your fault or ours that it hasn't been done before. I always felt that you and your dad would want to make up this horrid quarrel, but it was no good asking you to stay as long as that dreadful old man was alive, though I suppose I oughtn't to speak so of mamma's own brother; still, I hadn't seen him since I was quite a child."

Joan had flushed uncomfortably and seemed to be going to speak, when Miss Mary suggested softly: "Perhaps Joan was fond of him. He was her grandfather, Carrie."

"Oh dear, how dreadful of me!" exclaimed Miss Carrie. "I'm always saying dreadful things like that. I am such a terrible chatter-box! Just like last night after the mission meeting. Mr. Brown,—he's our curate, and such a sweet man, my dear—now, Florrie, don't pinch me,—well, he asked if he should get us a cab, for he's very attentive—oh dear! that's another thing I shouldn't have said. So I thanked him, and without thinking I told him that mamma never allows us to go out in the evening alone. Of course, I meant that the maid hadn't fetched us yet; but he must have thought all sorts of dreadful things, perhaps that I was asking him to come with us or something."

"But why shouldn't he have seen you home, Cousin Carrie?" asked Joan in puzzled tones.

"Oh my dear girl! one can see you haven't lived in London long. Why, it would have been dreadfully wanting in *comme il faut*. I only hope, as it is, he doesn't think me a sad, forward thing. But don't call me 'cousin,' dear, it sounds so stiff and dreadful, when we're all girls together here."

Joan almost laughed, but she caught herself up in time. "Don't you find it rather inconvenient, always being—fetched?" She hesitated over the incongruously childish word.

"Of course it's inconvenient, but what can we girls do?"

"Oh, I go out alone at any time," Joan began incautiously.

The remark fell like a thunderbolt. "No lady ventures out in the evening unattended," announced old Mrs. Marsden. The rarity of her remarks was only equalled by their unpleasantness.

Carrie had given a little scream, which was echoed by Florence. "Oh, I should be frightened to death," she cried; "but then you are so big and strong, almost like a man. Poor little Florrie and me would be afraid that some great big ogre would eat us up."

"Yes, I am strong," assented Joan cheerfully. "Feel my biceps," she said, turning to the old lady. "Billy says it's the best biceps he's ever known in a girl."

"Who is Billy, if it isn't indiscreet?" giggled Miss Carrie.

"Oh, he's just one of the boys."

The old lady's awful tones again broke into the conversation. "I was not aware you had any brothers," she said.

Carrie and Florence giggled and Miss Mary moved uneasily, but Joan went on with undiminished cheerfulness:

"No more I have. They're just 'pals,' you know—men who live near my home; I've known most of them since I was quite small. A lot have gone away now, though; it's positively heart-breaking. Billy's at the Front. That's not his real name, of course; it's William Ernest Hales, but you simply can't call him that—no one could. I'll show you his photo if you like."

"I think it's time to get ready for dinner," interposed Miss Mary timidly.

If Joan went upstairs under the ban of Mrs. Marsden's disapproval, it darkened heavily on her reappearance in full evening dress. Poor Joan was hardly to blame, for in her own home and at the other houses where she visited they dressed for dinner as a matter of course. On her rare visits to London she had stayed at the Grand Central, and had had, as she expressed it, "perfectly gorgeous times," which had certainly demanded décolleté toilettes. So she donned a favorite Empire gown with perfect serenity, and was absolutely taken aback to find that, although her cousins had changed, it was only to high, much-trimmed pink silk blouses, while Mary wore a black silk dress with a piece of lace ungracefully pinned about the shoulders.

"I wish she'd let me fix that fichu; she'd look quite pretty," thought Joan, but aloud she only said, "Oh dear, I'm afraid I'm too much dressed."

"Too little!" snorted old Mrs. Marsden.

"I suppose she hasn't the least idea of the proper thing to wear," whispered Carrie to Florence. "And what a garb! She must have made it at home. We really couldn't take her to the Annual Guild Meeting like that."

"May I look at your pretty necklace, my dear?" asked Cousin Mary.

Here the dinner-bell rang, and they made their way down the steep stairs into a basement room. The conversation was chiefly kept up by Carrie and Florence, who were discussing the doings of their neighbor's housemaid with great animation. "I do love to sit at the window and see all that's going on," one of them told Joan.

It was not until the end of the meal that the old lady snapped out a remark. "Mr. Beezley told me that he intends to pay us a visit this evening," she said.

Joan was surprised at the effect. She was so used to men dropping

in at home for a game of billiards, or merely to chat, that she did not know a masculine visitor might form a Great Event.

"Oh mamma!" shrilled Miss Carrie, "why didn't you tell us before; I must run and change my blouse."

"Goodness gracious!" twittered Miss Florence with an obvious glance at the looking-glass as she patted her hair distractedly, and then fled, probably to curl it.

Even Cousin Mary looked disturbed. "I'd better see about the coffee," she said to Joan. "Mamma likes a little nap downstairs, but you go into the drawing-room, my dear."

Joan obediently went upstairs; she was gurgling with suppressed amusement; but then her face saddened. "Oh, it's pitiful! pitiful!" she was thinking; "they are starved, not for food, of course, but for a little admiration, a little love. And I—I have so much."

After all this excitement, Joan looked up curiously when Mr. Beezley was announced. "Oh, he's quite old," she thought, with some disappointment.

As Mr. Beezley's shyness wore off, Joan grew interested. He was quite a different kind of a man from any she had known, although her "boys," as she called them, were nice young fellows, gentlemanly and athletic, if, perhaps, not very clever. Mr. Beezley was a botanist, it appeared, and he talked of his work in a way that made Joan wonder why she had always considered the subject as hopelessly dull. He was just telling her of some curious plant mimicry when Carrie came running in.

"Oh, dear, Mr. Beezley, you'll think it dreadfully rude of us all being out of the room like this. I hope it hasn't seemed a very long time. Mamma was so naughty, she never told us you were coming."

"Your cousin and I have been entertaining each other," said Mr. Beezley.

"Oh, yes, of course; I heard you talking as I came in, and using such dreadfully long, difficult words that you quite frightened poor little me. Were you telling her about your lecture next week? I suppose there won't be any ladies present?" she asked a trifle obviously.

"Yes," he replied. "Would you care to come?"

"Oh Mr. Beezley,"—Carrie gave a giggle,—"you must talk to mamma about it. I couldn't go alone, though, could I?"

"I meant that I could take a party," Beezley said rather shortly, looking round.

"Oh, that would be delightful, if dear Joan would accompany us," began Miss Carrie, and then the others appeared and conversation became general.

"It's delicious," Joan said to herself, "quite too delicious; I'm

to be the chaperone. I don't believe it's ever dawned on her that I'm good-looking!"

The evening seemed very long after that. Miss Carrie played and sang, as might have been expected. "I suppose a great, strong Thing like you despises my poor little accomplishments," she said suddenly to Joan with a spice of malice; "you only care for playing cricket and football and that sort of thing, don't you, dear?"

Joan laughed unpleasantly. She was about to retort, but she saw Miss Mary looking distressed. "The only accomplishment I ever prided myself on was turning cartwheels," she remarked instead, "and that isn't much use socially after nursery days."

"Oh you dreadful, dreadful girl!" Miss Carrie turned away, overcome with blushes.

"I think it was rather nice of me not to tell them that I really can sing," Joan was saying to herself—rather hotly, for she was not used to feline amenities. "But I like Cousin Mary; I won't make her uncomfortable; besides, Cousin Carrie is old enough to be treated with forbearance," and Joan felt a little inward ripple of amusement.

"It may have been the prospect of more music that caused Mr. Beezley to take a sudden departure. Miss Carrie immediately abandoned the music-stool. "Oh, I'm so tired," she yawned; "let's come along to bed."

Joan was tired too, and welcomed the suggestion. She soon found, however, the going to bed was nominal. "Florrie and I will brush our hair in your room, dear," said Miss Carrie; "then we can have a good talk. I'm longing to hear all about you. I'm sure you're a dreadfully naughty girl too," and she giggled slyly.

To Joan's relief, however, she found that their longing to hear about her showed itself by talking continuously about themselves. It seemed, indeed, that they would go on indefinitely, and Joan's brain began to reel as she listened to detailed accounts of a long succession of curates. At last an imperious knocking was heard on the wall.

"Oh, that's mamma," whispered Miss Carrie; "we must run, or we'll get into a dreadful scrape. There, I said you'd much sooner share our room, then we could have gone on all night, but Mary thought not, as you were almost a stranger and that. But I'd be dreadfully nervous at sleeping alone—oh, quite terrified. Don't you really mind?"

"I hate sharing a room," said Joan. She was on the edge of losing her temper.

"Oh, oh, oh," she groaned, as at last she was left alone, "a whole month of this, twenty-eight days, billions of hours! Why did I say I'd stop so long!"

She pulled back the many curtains and flung open the window. The night seemed restfully large and cold and far-away after all this tittle-



tattle of flirtations and personalities. "Why haven't they ever learned to grow old?" she reflected wonderingly. "People ought to be taught it at school. Perhaps, though, they'd choose not to have a single wrinkle, inside or out, and call it 'wearing well.' Oh, it isn't, though! It's putting wigs and rouge on your mind; it's being stunted, deformed, —pitiable," and Joan flung out her firm white arms with a breezy gesture of youth.

Suddenly she let her hands fall. "To think that in twenty years I might be like that," she said slowly; "I've no work either, nothing to give me mental wrinkles. Oh, it's enough to make one get married. It really is—only I'm so dreadfully fond of *all* the dear boys." Her lips curved deliciously.

## II.

THE weeks passed more bearably than Joan had anticipated. Mr. Beezley's frequent visits were certainly an alleviation, although Carrie and Florrie usually monopolized his attention, despite his obvious struggles to join the rest of the party at the other side of the room. Occasionally he did manage it, and he and Joan had some delightful conversations. He discovered, to her surprise, quite an unexplored continent in her brain. Even when Miss Carrie's one-sided flirtation proved too detaining, Joan enjoyed the opportunity it gave her of talking to Miss Mary. She had grown fond of this middle-aged cousin, who was not very original, perhaps, but under whose timidity lay a sweet and kindly graciousness, which only needed a little warmth and sunshine to be revealed. She was more than passively unperfected, she was actively unhappy, Joan discovered, when her stay was nearing its end.

It had been such a pleasant evening too. Carrie and Florence were at their weekly guild meeting and Mr. Beezley had called. It was quite a remarkable coincidence how often his visits chanced to fall on this night. As he was taking off his coat in the hall the postman's knock had sounded, so he brought in the letter that had come—a letter with the stirring post-mark of "Active Service." Joan danced for joy when she saw it, for she had been very anxious about her Billy. She insisted on reading it aloud, and Mary and Mr. Beezley listened with interest to the accounts of marches and privations, graphic by their very ill-telling. Through it all ran a spirit of joyous adventure and fresh young camaraderie, that was clean and bracing as the wind over the moor.

"Oh, I wish I were there with him," cried Joan, and, seizing the never-used brass poker, she made pretence to shoulder arms, then, dashing to the piano, she broke out into "The Bonnets of Bonnie Dundee." Her listeners sat there dumb. They had not guessed the presence of this thrilling contralto voice. Presently Mr. Beezley got up and stood

beside her, looking down at the vivid face and strong, white throat. She sang song after song; it was an orgy of youth and life and color. Only Cousin Mary sat undistinguishable in the dusky background, seeming ever to grow paler and less significant.

It may have been through very happiness that Joan could not sleep that night, a most unusual circumstance. At last she thought that she would fetch a book, so she crept downstairs, very softly, for fear old Mrs. Marsden might wake and confront her, a terrifying object in an antique-patterned dressing-gown and large, frilled nightcap.

Joan opened the drawing-room door almost noiselessly, and then stopped short in amazement. Stretched on the sofa, her face hidden among the disordered antimacassars, lay a black-gowned figure. Could this be the calm, ladylike Miss Mary, this despairing woman who had flung herself down in a very abandonment of desolation? Joan was just going to hurry forward, thinking that her cousin must be ill, when the sound of a sob caught at her heart. She had often seen people in distress; when Billy went away she had cried a good deal herself, but it had been another sort of weeping. She turned and tiptoed upstairs. It seemed dishonorable to have suddenly divined the reason of this sorrow. "And she hasn't even got a room of her own to cry in, poor, poor Cousin Mary," said Joan.

And yet the next day at breakfast it was Joan who looked tired and uncomfortable. Cousin Mary was sitting placidly behind the large silver teapot, filling the cups with her usual careful sedateness. Joan began to wonder if she had dreamed last night's scene, when she saw her cousin's hand tremble slightly.

"I'd like to hear what time you came up to bed last night," old Mrs. Marsden was grumbling, "disturbing me just as I was dropping off. And goodness knows what hours you'd keep if you were left to yourself and didn't sleep in my room."

"I'm so sorry, mamma. I'm afraid I did allow myself to get too interested in the new Mudie books," said Miss Mary. She even smiled.

"If Billy gets six V. C.'s, he can't beat that," thought Joan. Then she choked over her tea prosaically.

Joan was glad that in two days her visit would be over. She was so unused to concealment that she found it hard not to betray her pity. This was the real reason that she declined going for a walk with Miss Mary that afternoon while Mrs. Marsden and the girls were out calling.

So Joan was alone when Mr. Beezley was announced. "I'm sorry the others are all out," she began a trifle nervously.

Mr. Beezley seemed nervous too. He did not sit down. "I'm glad," he said at last abruptly. "I've been wanting to see you alone, Miss Elliot. There's something I want to ask you. We've been good friends——" then he hesitated.

"It's coming," said Joan to herself, feeling rather sea-sick. She generally did on such occasions. She was very unromantic! Perhaps she felt worse than usual, for this was the first time that she had been uncertain of her own feelings.

"I think you must have seen that I—that there is someone in this house for whom I entertain a very warm regard," Mr. Beezley went on with an old-fashioned constraint.

"I like that much better than the modern way," suddenly flashed through Joan's mind with a curious impersonality, "it's more dignified. I wish he wore powdered hair and knee-breeches."

"Perhaps I ought not to address you on the subject, Miss Elliot, but you must see that my position is rather peculiar——"

"He thinks he ought to ask father's leave to pay his court; how deliciously mediæval," laughed Joan to herself. "He can't have proposed to many girls," she thought with a sudden tenderness.

"I do not want to speak more definitely to the lady," Beezley was saying, "for fear of wounding her feelings. I mean it might then spoil our friendship, if she could not reciprocate my attachment. So I thought that you, in your kindness, would give me some clew, some hint. No one else could do it."

"I think you must speak a little more definitely," said Joan softly. The corners of her mouth were trembling. She looked beautiful.

"Surely, surely I needn't say it," he was almost whispering; his face was very good to look at, glorified as it was by his emotion,—  
"surely I needn't tell you that I love—Miss Mary."

"What!" cried Joan. She could not help it. She would have summoned up her pride, but the shock had been too sudden. Fortunately Mr. Beezley misunderstood her.

"You surely could not imagine that I had any feeling towards Miss Carrie," he said, blushing boyishly.

"Oh, no, no!" Joan had mastered herself now. "I just thought you were such an old friend—like a brother—to them all, you know. I—I think you'd better ask Cousin Mary herself. I don't think she'll be wounded—though, of course, I don't know what she'll answer," she added hurriedly with a desperate womanly loyalty; for, indeed, she knew very well.

Mr. Beezley had taken a sudden step towards the door. "Perhaps I'll meet her if I go out," he said. Then he turned back. "How discourteous and ungrateful I am," and he held out his hand.

"Good-by. I love Cousin Mary too," she said.

He did meet Cousin Mary, and he must have acted on Joan's advice, for they were a very long time coming home, and when they arrived they looked most ridiculously happy. Joan hardly recognized her

cousin; for the first time she seemed to have blossomed out into full womanhood. She had at last felt the sunlight.

"I'm so happy about it," Joan whispered to her. She kept repeating the words to herself all the evening, and when she went upstairs that night she said them once again. Then, by way of showing her happiness, she began to cry.

"It's no good pretending," she whispered to herself, "it's no good pretending any more. I do care for him—oh, I do! At least what I like most is his preferring Cousin Mary. At last I've found one man who doesn't only think of looks. But then if it had been me he'd wanted I shouldn't have found him;" and she laughed dolefully. "Besides," she went on with a resolute cheerfulness, "when Billy comes home, as a defender of the empire, the amount of snubbing he'll need will be terrific. It will take up all my time and energy. He does look nice in khaki though. Dear old Bill!"



## IN NOVEMBER

BY INGRAM CROCKETT

THE wild duck's wavering wedge  
Upon the afterglow—  
A whisper in the sedge,  
The new moon hanging low.

A sparrow's flute-like call,  
A cobweb's twinkling gleam,  
A peace that hallows all—  
The beckoning of a dream.

A thought of long-lost days,  
A memory and a tear,  
A tenderness of haze  
Upon the woodlands sere.

And on the Spirit's lips  
The seal of silence set—  
The shadow of eclipse,  
The muteness of regret.

# LADY DELIA

*By Thomas Cobb*

*Author of "The Dissemblers," etc.*



LADY DELIA felt that she must tell somebody of her astounding experience, and when Janet Waymark called in Grosvenor Square at five o'clock on the last Tuesday in November the desired opportunity seemed to be provided.

The recollection caused her face to flush again with indignation, and Janet could not help admitting the great attractiveness of the girl, whom a year ago she had regarded as a child.

"You can't imagine anything half so dreadful," said Lady Delia, holding back her head disdainfully.

"Dreadful things don't happen to children of your age," answered Janet with the calm superiority of twenty-five. She was a small woman, rather fond of admitting that her only attraction was an income of twenty thousand pounds a year.

"But it *has* happened," Lady Delia insisted, "though it's difficult to believe that any man could do such a thing!"

"Who is he and what has he done?" asked Janet.

"I told you," Lady Delia explained, "that Will and I were getting up some private theatricals for our house-party."

Affairs connected with the ministry, of which he was a distinguished member, had brought the Earl of Wharfstead to London at a time when he would have preferred to be amongst his pheasants, but he fully intended to return to his country-place for Christmas.

"We are doing a comedietta," Lady Delia continued, "and in an evil hour I consented to take a part in a farce as well—a very small part, a parlor-maid, who hasn't a dozen words to say."

"Well?" suggested Janet languidly.

"We had a rehearsal here yesterday afternoon," said Lady Delia, "and I put on a black frock and the most elaborate cap and apron——"

"No doubt, you looked ravishing!" cried Janet, a little enviously.

"Oh, well," Lady Delia admitted, "if the wretched things hadn't suited me, I suppose it wouldn't have happened. After the rehearsal they all went away but Barbara, and I insisted on going downstairs to let her out."

"You were determined to live up to your part!"

"There was no one in the hall," said Lady Delia, "so I opened the street-door. Barbara begged me not to show myself, but it was almost

dark, and I could only be taken for one of our own servants, you know. Anyhow," Lady Delia continued, "I was standing in the middle of the door-way when a hansom stopped and a man——"

"Young?" asked Janet.

"About twenty-five, I suppose."

"And lovely?"

"He was rather good-looking——"

"But, of course," Janet suggested, "if it was almost dark, you couldn't see very much of him."

"Anyhow," said Lady Delia, "he took me for the parlor-maid. He came into the hall and—and what could I do?" she demanded, throwing out her hands.

"If I had been in your place," cried Janet, "I should have run away. But then, if I had been there, it wouldn't have been necessary."

"You see," Lady Delia explained, "he pressed on, and so I was obliged to draw back. Then he stared at me and asked whether Will was at home."

"And after that," said Janet, "I suppose he went away——"

"No, he didn't," was the reply. "He wanted to know whether Will was in London, and he said he should call again the day after to-morrow—that's to-morrow, you know. And then——"

"Well?" urged Janet.

"Oh, I wish I hadn't," said Lady Delia, "but I—I felt rather curious to know who he was, so I asked his name."

"Still keeping to your role of parlor-maid?"

"Why, of course."

"I don't see that it was quite a matter of course," said Janet.

"Anyhow," Lady Delia continued, "I asked his name, and he took out a card-case. He seemed to be rather nervous."

"Poor, dear man!"

"He fumbled with the card, you know, and once or twice he looked at me, and I—I——"

"What did you do?"

"I happened to be looking at him."

"Strange," said Janet reflectively.

"Then he gave me the card and our hands touched," Lady Delia continued, and Janet noticed that she was breathing very quickly.

"An accident, no doubt," she suggested.

"The next moment," cried Lady Delia indignantly, "he had the audacity to put his arm around my waist and—and he kissed my mouth."

"Oh!" said Janet, and Lady Delia covered her face with her hands. "Is that the end of the story?" Miss Waymark asked presently.

"Nearly."

"You may as well tell me the rest, even if it does seem like an anti-climax."

"It's only that he—he swore," faltered Lady Delia.

"He swore at you?"

"At himself, I suppose," was the answer. "I was intensely stupid. I couldn't help crying, and perhaps he felt a little ashamed."

"Don't you think he ought to?" cried Janet.

"Oh, it was horrible—abominable! But what am I to do?"

"To do?"

"Janet," said Lady Delia, "did you ever hate anybody?—not dislike, but really hate, you know?"

Janet shook her head.

"Too dangerous," she returned. "They say that if you press an intensely cold iron to your flesh, you can't tell whether it's hot or frozen. Extremes meet, you understand. May I hear his name?" asked Janet.

"Sir Francis Sargent," said Lady Delia.

She was too deeply absorbed by her own indignation to notice Janet's sudden expression of astonishment.

"I would do anything sooner that meet him again!" she exclaimed.

"That would prove a little uncomfortable for Sir Francis also," suggested Janet quietly.

"I want him to feel uncomfortable," said Lady Delia. "Will was talking about him last night," she continued. "He said he should invite him to Wharfstead for Christmas; besides, he will come to-morrow."

"If he felt ashamed of himself," answered Janet, "he will probably stay away."

Lady Delia did not answer for a moment.

"I am positive he will come," she said, with her face aflame.

"Well," suggested Janet, rising from her chair, "suppose you spend to-morrow afternoon with me. Will you?"

"Then," said Lady Delia, "I shall not see him."

"Do you want to see him?" demanded Janet sharply.

"Of course not. How can you suggest such a thing?" Lady Delia retorted.

"Then I shall expect you to-morrow afternoon."

Lady Delia accordingly set forth at about four o'clock to Park Lane. Janet, being an only child and having lost her mother several years before, was entirely her own mistress. Lady Delia fancied that she seemed nervous and excited that afternoon as they sat discussing their friends for ten minutes without interruption; but then the drawing-room door opened and to Lady Delia's consternation the butler announced,—

"Sir Francis Sargent."

He entered with the easy, self-possessed air of the modern young man, advancing with his hand outstretched to Janet.

"So glad you were able to come!" she exclaimed. "I wanted you so much to know my friend, Lady Delia. Lady Delia Herrick, Sir Francis Sargent."

All his self-possession left him, and for once in his life Sargent was entirely embarrassed. For a few moments he stood staring at Lady Delia and wishing that the floor might open to engulf him. His left hand trembled as he held his hat and cane, and with his right fingers he nervously twisted his dark mustache.

"Have you met Lady Delia before?" asked Janet with well-counterfeited astonishment.

"I—I think I have had—had that pleasure," he stammered, and nothing could have annoyed Lady Delia more than this manner of describing their previous encounter.

"Where was that?" asked Janet, whilst Lady Delia now recovered herself sufficiently to dart a reproachful look at her.

"Perhaps Lady Delia scarcely recollects," muttered Sargent, not knowing, indeed, what to say.

"I recollect perfectly," said Lady Delia in her most dignified manner.

"Quite lately, then?" Janet persisted.

"Our last—our last meeting," Sargent answered, aware that he was hopelessly floundering, "may not be an agreeable reminiscence to Lady Delia."

"You can't have the assurance to say you share her feeling!" cried Janet.

Lady Delia sat stiffly erect, with a flushed face and shining eyes, and even Janet recognized that she had never looked more bewitching.

She bit her lower lip as he glanced at her.

"No," he answered quietly, "I can't say that."

An embarrassing silence followed, Sargent devoutly wishing he could decently go away.

"A man is like the moon," said Janet abruptly.

"When it's under a cloud!" exclaimed Sir Francis.

"We see him night after night," Janet continued, "yet it seems that there's one side that's always hidden from us."

"No doubt some of us have our dark sides," he admitted.

"Very dark," said Lady Delia significantly, and at that he arose and shook hands with Janet. With a bow for Lady Delia, and an expression which was intended to be contrite, he left the room, and before Lady Delia could turn upon Janet she began to defend herself.

"I know you must think I have treated you abominably," she cried.

"I think you have," was the answer.



"It was no use," Janet admitted; "I couldn't resist the temptation——"

"You didn't even tell me you knew him!" said Lady Delia indignantly.

"That would have hindered his punishment!" exclaimed Janet. "You will admit he deserved it."

"I don't think I deserved it, Janet! Besides——"

"Well?"

"Only that I am quite capable of managing my own affairs. It was scarcely your business!"

"Oh, but, indeed, it was. I admit you are a victim. I met Sir Francis in Switzerland during the autumn. He was introduced to my father. He became—well, attentive to me. Of course," said Janet with a sigh, "I was an idiot. I tried to persuade myself that at last I had met a man who didn't think only of my money."

"I wish I hadn't told you a word about it," said Lady Delia, after a short pause.

"My dear, I shall always feel grateful to you!"

"Still," was the answer, "you choose an odd way to show gratitude."

"I am afraid I didn't think much about you," Janet admitted. "Oh!" she exclaimed, "to remember that he pretended to care, and yet half an hour after leaving me, that he could kiss a housemaid! It is atrocious!"

"But," said Lady Delia, "he didn't."

"Didn't what?"

"He didn't—he didn't kiss a housemaid."

"Anyhow, that was what he thought he was doing," cried Janet.

"Oh, of course, it was hateful of him," said Lady Delia, as she arose from her chair.

A few days passed without any further sign of Sir Francis Sargent, although Lady Delia gathered that Will had met him at the club. There were a good many of her "set" in London just now, and one evening during the first week of December Lady Delia went to a small and early dance at Mrs. Prince's, and there, with curious sensations, she saw Sargent.

He had obviously recovered from the embarrassment which he had shown at Janet's, and, approaching with complete audacity, he bowed to Lady Delia.

"I have had the honor of meeting you before," he began, and his impudence almost bewildered her. "May I ask you for a dance?" he added.

"Certainly not," was all she could say, although the words seemed entirely inadequate.

"Well," he continued, "if you will not dance with me, I hope, at least, you will give me a chance to explain——"

"There is one thing I hope devoutly," said Lady Delia.

"What is that?" he asked, leaning towards her.

"That you will never let me see you again!"

The next moment she scarcely knew whether to feel angry or amused, but Lady Delia determined to feel angry.

"We cannot talk here," said Sargent.

"I have not the slightest wish to talk to you anywhere," she rejoined.

"I only wish you to listen, you know," he continued with a smile, and, finding that she did not answer, he sat down by her side. "I have succeeded in solving the mystery," he remarked the next moment. "I braved Miss Waymark again——"

"It must have required courage," said Lady Delia, but then she grew angry with herself.

"Yes, it did," he admitted. "But I am not accustomed to sleepless nights. I was bound to discover why you were masquerading——"

"Oh, please—please——"

"I know," he went on, "that Miss Waymark has been giving me a bad character."

"Your deeds spoke for you," said Lady Delia, carried away by an impulse of the moment.

"You ignore my immense temptation," he answered.

"I think you acted disgracefully!"

"Peccavi!" cried Sir Francis.

"For a—a gentleman to come to his friend's house and insult a—a servant!"

"Oh, well, I didn't, you know, Lady Delia."

"You thought I—I was a servant!" she insisted.

"Upon my word, I thought you were a goddess," he said, bending eagerly towards her.

"You—you showed very little veneration," was the answer.

"I want you to bury the hatchet," he urged, "and accept me as your brother's friend."

"It seems to me," said Lady Delia, "that you must be a very undesirable friend for him."

Sargent glanced at her askant as he stroked his mustache. He came to the conclusion that he knew more about Lord William Herrick than his sister.

"Still," he persisted, "can you feel justified in repulsing a penitent?"

"I shall not refuse to meet you," Lady Delia began.

"Then life will become worth living again!" he exclaimed.

"For Janet's sake—if you succeed in making your peace with her," said Lady Delia.

"I fancy," he returned, "that you have a wrong impression——"

"Here is my partner!" she cried, "and I shall say no more about it."

She took excellent care to avoid him during the rest of that evening, although she perceived that he was the handsomest man in the room. He appeared to be very popular, also, and if he had not acted so lamentably, Lady Delia would not have been unwilling to dance with him.

She had made up her mind to avoid Janet Waymark for the remainder of her days, but, nevertheless, she paid a visit to Park Lane early in the following week.

"You are nothing if not magnanimous," said Janet without much warmth of welcome. "How are your plays going along?" she asked presently.

"I wish we were going to stay in London," answered Lady Delia with a sigh.

"Why?"

"Oh, it is dreadful!" cried Lady Delia. "Will has invited Sir Francis Sargent to Wharfstead——"

"Is he coming?" asked Janet eagerly.

"It is very abominable of him," answered Lady Delia.

"You know that Lady Wharfstead invited me for Christmas week," said Janet.

"Of course, we are all delighted," cried Lady Delia.

Wharfstead House was to be quite full for Christmas, and Janet Waymark was the last guest to arrive. With regard to Sargent, Lady Delia found herself in an embarrassing position, since it seemed desirable that the daughter of the house should treat him with something approaching courtesy. On the one or two occasions of their meetings since Mrs. Prince's dance Lady Delia had ignored his presence as far as in her lay, but on the afternoon of his arrival at Wharfstead she happened to be alone in the drawing-room.

"I confess," he said, as she gave him her finger-tips, "that I have come with a guilty conscience."

"It would have been better to follow its dictates," she retorted.

"The question arose in my mind," he said.

"How could you hesitate about the answer?" cried Lady Delia.

"You must understand that another organ came into play," he returned.

"Oh, yes, of course," Lady Delia answered, "you know that Janet Waymark is coming."

Before Sargent could answer her brother entered the room, and,

meeting Lady Delia again after taking the guest to his chamber, Her-  
rick reproached her concerning her treatment of Sir Francis.

"Upon my word," he said, "I can't understand why you always  
give the chap the cold shoulder. He isn't a bit used to that sort of  
thing."

"I daresay he isn't," answered Lady Delia, with a crimson face.

On the following morning the men and some of the ladies went out  
after Lord Wharfstead's pheasants, whilst Lady Delia drove to meet  
them in her governess cart for luncheon. As Sargent said that he had  
twisted his foot, Lord Wharfstead suggested that he should be driven  
home by Lady Delia, who looked annoyed in consequence. The cart  
being small, and the pony smaller, it would have been cruel to the  
animal to include a third person.

"Sorry," said Lady Delia, as the pony trotted slowly homeward,  
"that you have met with such a serious accident."

"Oh, it's of no consequence," he returned.

"I didn't imagine it was," she exclaimed.

"The fact is that I am bound to speak to you," said Sargent.

"A little shabby to make an excuse," she suggested.

"All's fair in love——"

"I was forgetting," answered Lady Delia, "that Janet would arrive  
before the others returned. I beg your pardon, Sir Francis," she added,  
putting back her head.

"It was nothing," he mumbled.

"You certainly said something."

"Nothing you ought to have heard," he answered.

"By the bye," she continued, "I have heard it on your lips before."

"Lady Delia," he said.

"Well?"

"I am going to run the risk of mortally offending you."

"It is a day after the fair," she retorted.

"When I look back——"

"How hateful that you should be able to look back to that!" she  
exclaimed.

"It wasn't the pony's fault, you know," urged Sargent, as she  
lightly plied the whip. "When I remember that day——"

"I hope you feel as intensely ashamed as I do," she said.

"Do you?" he whispered, leaning forward in the cart.

She stared into his face for a moment.

"What do you mean?" she demanded.

"It's no use going in for subterfuge," he continued, "because it is  
my most pleasant——"

"You are insulting me!" cried Lady Delia.

"I told you," he answered, "that I ran the risk of mortally offend-  
ing you. But I want to ask whether, when you look back——"

"I always avoid it," she insisted.

"Then when I remind you——"

"It ought to be the very last thing you could do."

"Yes, I know," he returned. "But the end sometimes justifies the means. I want to know whether—candidly—the recollection is wholly detestable?"

"It is absolutely and entirely hateful," answered Lady Delia, and he rubbed his ankle as if it pained him acutely, although it did not.

"I am sorry," he said quietly.

"Did you imagine it could be anything else?" she demanded.

"Oh, well, I hoped——"

"How strangely you must think of me!"

"As I have never thought of any other woman," he protested.

"That," said Lady Delia, "is fortunate for the others."

"Yes—perhaps," he admitted, and she looked straight at the pony's ears.

"A man who could insult a servant! Because," she continued hastily, "if you had known who I was, you would never have dared——"

"Not then," he answered.

"What do you mean?" she cried.

"Of course, I should have had to wait for the privilege," he said.

"But——"

"There is Janet!" exclaimed Lady Delia, as they came within sight of the house and saw Miss Waymark and her maid in the act of alighting from Lord Wharfstead's black omnibus. The visitor was the most self-possessed of the group, and a few moments later they all went to Lady Wharfstead in the drawing-room.

After the house became at last quiet that night Lady Delia tapped at Janet's door.

"Had you been seeing much of Sir Francis before he came here?" she inquired, looking charming in her pale blue robe.

"Oh, pretty much," said Janet, with a shrug.

"He twisted his ankle this morning," Lady Delia continued, "and my father told me to drive him home."

"So you think I may be jealous!" cried Janet with a curious kind of laugh.

She was a woman with few illusions, and from the outset she recognized the only motives which could induce Sargent to ask her to marry him. But, in truth, the wish had been father to that thought, and without being passionately in love, she had arrived at the conclusion that Sir Francis would make a tolerable husband as things went. Although she was not broken-hearted when she saw the position of affairs at Wharfstead House, she became bitterly angry and vindictive.

Her vexation reached the maximum on the evening of the play, when

a number of persons from the neighborhood reënforced the house-party. The comedietta, which came first, was acted neither better nor worse than is usual with such things in similar circumstances, but it probably caused greater pleasure to the actors than to the audience.

Janet's seat afforded an uninterrupted view of Sargent, whose eyes, especially during the farce, scarcely left Lady Delia's face. It was true that she looked ravishing in the parlor-maid's dress, and when the play ended and the actors and actresses mingled with the other guests in their stage make-up, Sir Francis, leaning against the wall by the door, was by way of making himself conspicuous.

And Lady Delia, seeming to be aware of her power in this guise in which Sargent had first seen her, might be suspected of a tendency to exert it. Janet felt perplexed by the problem which Lady Delia presented, marvelling whether in truth the girl's wrath was as overwhelming as she had pretended. On the impulse of a moment Janet set forth in search of Herrick, a hot-tempered young man, unusually devoted to his sister.

"Intensely hot in here," she cried, resting a hand familiarly on his arm. "Can't we find some cooler air?" So he led her to a secluded corner of the hall. "By the bye," she added, "has Delia forgiven your friend, Sir Francis, yet?"

"What on earth has she to forgive?" demanded Herrick.

"Didn't she tell you?"

"I only know she usually treats the chap villainously," he answered, and at that moment they saw Lady Delia cross the other end of the hall and disappear into the billiard-room, to be followed a few seconds later by Sargent.

"Is that your notion of villainous treatment?" asked Janet, forcing a laugh.

"I never pretend to understand a woman," said Herrick.

"Well, it's a little hard in the present case," she rejoined. "If a man had insulted me in that way——"

"Insulted!" exclaimed Herrick quickly, and then Janet gave her own version of the affair.

In the meantime Sir Francis shut the door of the billiard-room.

"Now, this," he murmured, "is the very kindest thing you have done for me!" and he stood with one hand on the cushion of the billiard-table, gazing into her face.

"Only because of your importunity," said Lady Delia.

"Will you grant me anything if I am only importunate enough?" he asked.

"As much as you deserve," she retorted.

"Ah, but I don't imagine I deserve it," he continued. "I admit that I acted like a——"

"There is no need to revile yourself," she answered.

"But, upon my word," he said, "now I see you again as you looked that afternoon, I find it difficult to blame myself very severely."

"The woman tempted me!" said Lady Delia. "It is the old story."

"Why, yes," he urged, "if you will only let me tell it."

"How many editions have there been already?" she asked.

"It is the first," he answered.

"Janet," she suggested.

"I don't feel guilty in that case," he said. "My people wished me to——"

"Oh, I quite understand you," she cried, with a laugh.

"Then," he returned, "you must know that I love you——"

Sir Francis found it necessary to set a watch upon his tongue as the door of the billiard-room opened and Herrick entered with an ominous face. For a moment the three stood regarding each other in silence,—Lady Delia flushed and a little nervous, Sir Francis with a frown on his brow, Herrick obviously bent on mischief.

"I want a word with you, Sargent!" he exclaimed.

"Would it make much difference if you had it five minutes later?" asked Sir Francis, striving after patience.

"I should like to know what the devil you meant by——"

"Will!" said Lady Delia, "the play is over, you know."

"Sargent has acted like an infernal——"

"What did he do?" she demanded, drawing herself to her full height.

"Anyhow," said Will, more wrathful now with his sister than with his friend, "you don't seem much to mind it!"

"What?" demanded Lady Delia.

"Janet told me that Sargent had insulted you," cried Herrick, devoutly wishing he had not attempted to interfere.

"How very foolish of her," said Lady Delia.

"The first time you met——"

"Oh, no doubt," she answered, "F-Francis was a little precipitate."

"Look here, Herrick," exclaimed Sir Francis, suddenly reviving, "Delia is going to make the best of me. The fact is, she is going to be my wife!"

"Good Lord!" said Herrick, staring from the one to the other. "When did that come about?"

Lady Delia raised her eyes, and as they met Sargent's she smiled.

"When was it?" she faltered, and she lowered her eyes again.

"I think," he answered, "it was a foregone conclusion from the first," and as he drew nearer and took Lady Delia's hands, Herrick thought it discreet to withdraw.

Janet did not in the least enjoy his subsequent explanation.

## "NEW-BORN BABE OF THE ROYAL PALACE"

BY SUSIE M. BEST

"NEW-BORN Babe of the Royal Palace,  
Thine is a cradle carved of gold."  
*"Keep thy speech, for I have a vision  
Now of One in a manger cold."*

"New-born Babe of the Royal Palace,  
Silk and satin and lace are thine."  
*"Hush! for I see Another lying  
Roughly housed with the common kine."*

"New-born Babe of the Royal Palace,  
Lit are the lights in tower and hall."  
*"Seest thou in the heavens yonder  
One great star that is worth them all?"*

"New-born Babe of the Royal Palace,  
Bells are clanging the news to earth."  
*"Nay, not so! 'Tis a flight of angels  
Choirng of a Saviour's birth."*

"New-born Babe of the Royal Palace,  
Heir to a kingdom's crown art thou."  
*"Yea, perchance—but I see a halo  
Circling another Baby's brow."*

"New-born Babe of the Royal Palace,  
Hark, the rejoicings loud for thee!"  
*"Oh, miracle! 'tis a world acclaiming  
Him who shall die upon a Tree."*

"New-born Babe of the Royal Palace,  
Writ in the annals is thy name."  
*"'Twill be forgot when the mangered Baby  
Rises into a Saviour's fame."*

"New-born Babe of the Royal Palace,  
All to thee must homage bring."  
*"Fools and blind! I am but the creature—  
He in the manger is the King!"*



# THE LITTLEST BOY AND SANTA CLAUS

*By Edwin L. Sabin*



THE great hall clock, stationed opposite the foot of the stairs, struck two. From his bed above the Littlest Boy listened with a sense of awe. Never before had he heard it strike so late an hour. Once, indeed, he had heard it strike ten, but usually it had struck eight—and when next he was awake it was striking six and morning had come.

This was a very valuable clock, so the Littlest Boy had been given to understand. It was much taller than himself, and it had so much to say,—striking, as it did, every quarter hour,—and said it in such measured, solemn tones, that he always paid it profound respect.

Now there it was, evidently sleepless, even in the middle of the night keeping watch upon the household affairs!

The Littlest Boy lay and listened. The house was impressively still. The only sounds audible were the stately ticking of the monitor clock below, and the regular breathing of the Biggest Boy and the Biggest Girl in the room adjoining.

The Littlest Boy's eyes were wide open and gazing into the velvet blackness close above his face. When he had gone to bed it had been Christmas Eve. He was not fully certain as to the line of demarkation, but it occurred to him that now it was Christmas Day! Then he began to blink and think.

He wondered if Santa Claus had come yet. Before the grate-fire, down in the library, were ranged three chairs: a rocking-chair for the Biggest Girl, a straight-backed, ordinary chair for the Biggest Boy, and a huge, roomy arm-chair for himself. In addition, he had hung up his stockings to the mantel.

The Littlest Boy considered this quite a clever idea. He hoped that Santa Claus would appreciate the conveniences offered: the chair into which to dump the bulky articles, and the stockings into which to stuff the smaller ones.

He tried to picture to himself how, if Santa Claus had been and gone, that chair and those stockings must look. At intervals, as some particularly alluring fancy stood out before him, he gave an ecstatic wriggle and a few blinks extra.

Oh, the red wagon! And the silver napkin-ring! Supposing he got them both! It did not seem to him possible that he could exist without either, and yet—and yet—he mustn't exact too much.

If he might take one peep into the library,—just one tiny peep,—to find out whether or not Santa Claus had been.

He felt that he ought not to yield to this temptation; and he sighed hard and twisted. But even in the midst of his struggle he did yield, for first his disobedient right foot stole from beneath the blue coverlet, and next his disobedient left foot; and in a moment all of him, enveloped in his long, pink-flannel night-gown, was moving resolutely towards the door-way.

He shuffled to the head of the stairs, and descended to the midway landing under the colored glass window. The stairs, of polished oak, were smooth and cold to his soles, but he did not mind, because often had he, thus apparelled, traversed and retraversed them in the process of going to bed.

At the landing the stairs turned sharply. The Littlest Boy also turned with them to continue his journey. Now there ahead of him was the monitor clock, staring him in the face, and ticking loud reproof. From the library, off the hall, came the reminiscent glow of the grate-fire with which the Christmas Eve had been celebrated.

Down sped the Littlest Boy, boldly ignoring the astounded clock, down the remaining flight, and across the square hall, whose rugs were soft and comforting. On the threshold of the library he stopped short, frightened at what he had done.

He had caught Santa Claus!

Aye, there was Santa Claus, bending over the big chair, which, the Littlest Boy glimpsed, was overflowing with packages and things.

I do not know but that the Littlest Boy would have beat courteous retreat (although, of course, his farther curiosity was simply tremendous) had not Santa Claus suddenly glanced up and descried him—a small, pink figure, made still pinker by the glowing coals, framed, wide-eyed, in the library door-case.

“Hello!” said Santa Claus softly, not moving.

“Hello!” responded the Littlest Boy. “I didn’t know you were here.”

“Didn’t you?” remarked Santa Claus, straightening up and slowly stepping backward.

“No,” assured the Littlest Boy. “Did you get in through the chimbley?”

During his whole life—that is, ever since he could talk—the Littlest Boy had been trying to say “chimney;” but, somehow, that “l,” being so slim and hatchet-faced, always nimbly slipped in and elbowed out the “n.”

“Did I get in through the chimbley!” repeated Santa Claus; and then he opened his mouth in a silent laugh. “Yes, I clumb down the chimbley,” he said.

"I s'pose it was the sitting-room one, then," hazarded the Littlest Boy. "The fire in this one would have burned you—wouldn't it?"

"Sure; it was the settin'-room chimbley," affirmed Santa Claus, with more of his silent laugh.

The Littlest Boy noted that Santa Claus, also, seemed to have trouble with that word.

"You say 'chimbley' and I say 'chimley;' but my father says—says ch—ch—chimneley is right," informed the Littlest Boy.

"You don't mean it!" returned Santa Claus, who, having backed to the window looking upon the side porch, now, with his hand behind him, was deftly sliding it up.

"Please don't go, Santa Claus," besought the Littlest Boy. "We'll talk real low, so nobody 'll hear. That is, if you're not in too big a hurry to stay," he added politely.

"Well, I've got a lot of places to ten' to yet to-night," replied Santa Claus. "But seein' you're so anxious I'll stay a bit, with this here winder open a mite so's for to make wentilation."

"When you go, I wish you'd let me see you go up the chimley," announced the Littlest Boy cautiously, so that the Biggest Boy and the Biggest Girl over their heads might not be disturbed. "Or is it too hard?"

"It's kinder hard," acknowledged Santa Claus. He had seated himself on the broad sill. "I prefer the winder."

"But how do you get on the roof again, where the reindeers are?" queried the Littlest Boy.

"I don't use no reindeers any more," replied Santa Claus. "I come in a balloon, an' I climb up the rope,—see?"

"Oh!" said the Littlest Boy.

He had been advancing, step by step, into the room.

"Where's your whiskers?" he asked, now able to obtain a clearer view of the visitor.

"I got 'em burnt off in a red-hot chimbley," answered Santa Claus.

"Oh!" again said the Littlest Boy.

He was very sorry for Santa; it must have hurt him terribly. But he was disappointed too. Santa Claus without whiskers, and in a slouch hat, fell somewhat short of the Littlest Boy's ideal.

"Is that your sack?" he inquired, indicating a limp bag that was resting on the sill beside Santa.

"Sure," responded Santa Claus.

"It's almost empty, isn't it!" asserted the Littlest Boy. "But I s'pose you've lots more up in the balloon. Had you got all through with me? My chair is the middle one, there. And those are my stockings, in front of it."

"Well, I was kinder foolin' round when you came in," confessed

Santa Claus; "but I reckon I'm through. Them other chairs are your ma's an' pa's, I take it?"

"Yes; mamma's is the rocker and papa's is the other," informed the Littlest Boy hurriedly. "Did you bring me a red wagon and a silver napkin-ring?"

"Aren't they there?" queried Santa Claus.

"May I look?" asked the Littlest Boy eagerly.

"Sure," granted Santa Claus, with his favorite word

The Littlest Boy was not slow in taking advantage of that permission. In a twinkling he was at the chair, and, oblivious to the rustling that he was producing, was burrowing amidst its contents.

He did not have to burrow to find the red wagon. Its two front wheels were sticking straight up against the chair's back!

"Oooo-ee!" jubilated the Littlest Boy, turning with sparkling eyes. "Will its sides fold over?"

"You bet!" assured Santa Claus.

"Just bushels and bushels of thanks, Santa Claus," purled the Littlest Boy rapturously. "I hope it's bigger than my Cousin James's is! Is it?"

"Sure!" said Santa Claus. "Now how about the ring? Ain't that there?"

"I don't see it," replied the Littlest Boy, rummaging.

"Mebbe it's in the stockin's," suggested Santa Claus.

And it was!—a beautiful, shiny, silver napkin-ring, all done up in tissue-paper!

"Oooooo-eee!" gurgled the Littlest Boy, unwrapping it. "I bet it's the very solides' kind!"

"Lemme see," demanded Santa Claus. "That's what I intended it to be, anyhow, an' I hope I ain't made no mistake."

"Yes, it's solid, all right enough," he said, weighing it in his hand, while the Littlest Boy watched him anxiously. "But don't you think that that there wagon an' this here ring, both together, are too much for a kid like you?"

"I don't know," responded the Littlest Boy, abashed. "I've tried to be awful good. I've picked up kindlin' and went on errands and brushed my teeth—and—and gone down cellar after dark, and—and—and I've hardly ever cried when I got hurt!"

"Still, seems to me," persisted Santa Claus, gazing at the shiny ring in his fingers, "that a wagon alone is enough for one kid, besides all them other things you've got in yon chair an' socks. I dunno but what I'll take this an' give it som'ers else."

"Well," agreed the Littlest Boy gravely, "if—if you can find some little boy who ought to have it more'n me, then you can—can take it; and p'raps next Christmas——"

"God!" roared the Biggest Boy, like an angry lion, leaping through the library door-way.

With a slam, up sped the window; with an oath, out whirled Santa Claus!

"You've scared Santa Claus! You've scared Santa Claus!" wailed the Littlest Boy in despair.

"I have, have I!" exclaimed the Biggest Boy, gathering the wailer into his arms.

"And he took my ring," farther lamented the Littlest Boy.

"He did, did he?" repeated the lion—that is, the Biggest Boy—in a commiserating growl. "Never mind; we'll get another."

"But I told him he might, if there's some other little boy who'd ought to have it more," explained the Littlest Boy truthfully. "Maybe he'll bring me one next Christmas."

Here the Biggest Boy shut the treacherous window; and with the Biggest Girl, who by this time had arrived and was hugging and kissing the Littlest Boy's two rosy feet, as they hung down inside the Biggest Boy's arms, close accompanying, carried him upstairs to bed.

What do you think! Evidently Santa Claus repented, or else he had only been joking, or else he could find no other little boy who was more worthy; for, after all, at daylight there was discovered, lying on the mat before the side-door, that very same ring,—wrapped, it is true, not in fine white tissue, but in coarse brown paper.

However, upon the paper was scrawled, in ragged but unmistakable lines:

"for the kid  
SANTY CLAWS"



## LEAVES

BY AGNES LEE

**L**ITTLE dead leaves, little dead leaves,  
Thronging about my door;  
When the summer wanes and the autumn cleaves,  
I have seen ye oft before!

We are little dead hands, little dead hands,  
Tapping thy walls around;  
Living, we hid the sky's blue lands,  
But now we hide the ground.

Little dead hands, beckoning me  
Forth from a fire's red glow,  
If ye will tell me whither beck ye,  
I will open my door and go.

# A VOLUNTARY EXILE

By *Jennette Lee*

*Author of "The Son of a Fiddler," "A Pillar of Salt," etc.*



THE afternoon sun poured down with scorching heat. A little, old woman, bending over the stone wall, glanced up impatiently. She dropped the large, flat stone that she had lifted from its place, and, feeling in the silk bag hanging at her side, drew out a spotless handkerchief, with which she wiped her face.

"Turrible hot," she murmured. "'Seems's if it got hotter'n' hotter every year."

She replaced the handkerchief in the bag, and lifting the stone once more, carried it laboriously across the open yard to the straight path that ran from the door to the road. She dropped it with a sigh in the path and straightened her back stiffly.

"There," she said, "that makes ten."

She glanced at them complacently.

"It'll be one good, smooth place to walk on," she murmured. "The old wall wa'n't good for anything anyway."

She looked towards the low, tumble-down wall, beyond which an orchard shimmered in the hot light. Beyond the orchard the ground dipped sharply into a hollow. A road curved from this hollow and ran along in front of the house. As the old woman stood looking towards the orchard, a head rose over the hill facing towards the house. It was large and round and fair and rested on a pair of plump shoulders.

The old woman peered at it sharply. "Melissy," she said, under her breath. "Well, I'm glad to see a livin' soul."

She started down the path at a brisk trot, the black bag swinging at her side. "How-de-do, Melissy?"

The young woman smiled—a round, slow, placid smile. "How-de-do, Aunt Nancy?" She came leisurely up the long path, fanning herself with her sun-hat, which she had removed. She glanced down at the stones in the path and then at the old woman's flushed face. "What you been doin', Aunt Nancy?" she asked.

"Makin' a walk." The tone had a shade of defiance.

"Makin' a walk!"

The old woman nodded. "It'll be one good, smooth place to walk on 'fore I die," she said.

Melissa's smile deepened, like a growing moon. "Why, Aunt Nancy!" she said with mild wonder.

The old woman led the way into the house. She drew forward a big chair to one of the shaded front windows and pushed up the curtain a little.

"Set down and get cooled off," she said. "I'll get you a drink."

She bustled away and presently returned, bringing a glass of water. A faint, cool mist clouded the outside of the glass.

Melissa took a long, restful draught. "You *do* have good water, Aunt Nancy," she said, handing back the glass. She settled back comfortably in the chair.

Aunt Nancy took the glass in silence. She carried it to the table across the room. "It's all down hill," she said bitterly as she faced about.

"What is?" said Melissa with a start. She had been looking into the syringa-bush outside the window.

"The path," replied Aunt Nancy.

Melissa's eyes sought the long, straight walk leading to the road. "I don't see's 'tis," she said. "It looks pretty level from here."

"I don't mean that one; that's all right,"—the old woman looked out at it approvingly,—"I mean the one to the well."

"Oh!" Melissa's mouth remained open.

Aunt Nancy's was closed firmly. "The' ain't a place on the farm you can walk on that's level ground," she said at last, opening her lips a crack.

"I don't know's the' is," responded Melissa slowly, "but I like it." She looked out of the window contentedly. The blue hills that rose in the distance showed through a gap in the nearer ones.

"Well, I don't." The old mouth took on a grim look. "I've lived here goin' on sixty-two year now, and I've done nothin' but go up an' down hill all my life. I'd like a little smooth goin' 'fore I die."

"Why, Aunt Nancy,"—the younger woman laughed with a sweet, fresh sound,—"I didn't know's you felt that way."

"Well, I do." The old mouth trembled a little. "I've al'ays felt so. Nobody's known. John never knew. I thought mebbe he would. But he didn't." She glanced across to the opposite hill, where lines of white shone among the trees.

Melissa rocked for a moment in silence. "I'd go down to the Plain on a visit if I was you," she said at last.

"I'm goin', but it won't be no visit,—I'm a-goin' to stay—for good an' all." The words came slowly, as if a plan were forming itself.

Melissa gave a little start. She looked about the room. "What'll you do with the things?" she asked.

"Sell 'em."

"Everything?"

The old woman nodded. "I'm tired of 'em, I tell ye. I want level goin' an' new things to look at an' think about 'fore I die. I'm goin' to have patent spring rockers 'stead o' these old slat chairs, an' a clock with chimes 'stead o' that,"—she motioned towards the tall clock across the room,—“an' new dishes, the latest patterns,—like them down to the tea-store,—an' Brussels carpet an' a chenille table-cover an' a furnace fire an' a refrigerator box an'—gas, maybe.” She stopped, a little breathless.

Melissa looked impressed and thoughtful. "I wonder if you'll like it?" she said slowly. "Don't seem's if you would." She looked around the big, cool room, with its shining furniture, its quaint rag carpet, and the old clock ticking off the sleepy afternoon.

It ticked through a long silence.

Aunt Nancy broke it. "I'm going to advertise in the *Gazette* right off," she said with an air of decision. "I declare, I wonder I never thought of it before. I b'lieve you put it into my head."

Melissa shook her head, smiling a little. "It's somethin' I shouldn't ever have thought of," she said. She waited a minute. "If you're goin' to sell, why can't you sell to Abner'n' me?" She spoke with a little hesitation, as if fearing to take advantage of her aunt's foolishness.

The old woman stared at her. "Why, I can!" A light broke over her face. "I declare! Seem's if it was Providence," she said wonderingly. "It's just the place for you'n' Abner. You'll like it an' I can go where I want to." She drew a deep breath of satisfaction.

Melissa shook her head again. "It don't seem's if we ought to let you do it," she said doubtfully.

"You tell Abner to come up an' see me this evening," was Aunt Nancy's response.

She stood in the door-way and watched her niece go down the long path. "I guess I won't finish pavin' it to-day," she called gayly after her. "You'n' Abner don't hanker after pavements the way I do."

Melissa looked back, with her slow smile. "We like it just as 'tis," she said placidly.

## II.

"Come right in, Abner." Aunt Nancy looked up, smiling and elated.

The young man standing in the door-way paused, looking at her doubtfully. He was tall and thin, and the indecisive beard that strayed around his chin gave him an air of youthfulness. "How are you feelin' to-night, Aunt Nancy?" he asked.

She laughed briskly. "I'm feelin' all right, Abner. Come right in an' set down. You needn't be afraid I'm goin' out of my mind."



The young man smiled feebly. He crossed the room and seated himself in a straight-backed chair, his hat balanced on his knees. "Melissy said you was thinkin' some of sellin'," he said hesitatingly, glancing about the room.

She nodded. "Yes, I'm goin' to sell."

The young man raised his hand to his chin. He rubbed it thoughtfully. "Don't seem's if we ought to let you," he said.

She gave him a sharp glance and settled back in her chair. "Now, Abner Suncook, don't you bother your head about me, my time o' life!" She looked him over again. "I've spanked you a good many times, hain't I, Abner?" she asked, regarding him over the top of her spectacles.

He nodded his head. A smile came slowly into his light-blue eyes.

It was reflected in the black ones peering over the spectacles. "I guess I'm old enough to know what I'm about. I've been thinkin' it over since Melissy was here this afternoon, an' it's all pretty clear in my mind."

She waited for a moment, looking thoughtfully at the old clock. Then she shook her head with a little sigh.

"Your father was a Suncook," she said, turning the black eyes on him once more, "an' I'm a Suncook, born an' bred, an' I've lived in this house sixty-two year,—come next March,—an' it's long enough. My husband died here, an' my children was all born an' died here. "I've closed a good many dead eyes in this house, first an' last,—an' put pennies on 'em," she said reflectively.

The young man stirred uneasily.

"I s'pose I ought to want to die here myself," she went on slowly, "but I don't—not yet. There's a spirit in me. I want to see some-thin' besides the everlastin' hills before I go." She looked at him sharply. "You don't know much about that feelin', do you, Abner?"

He shook his head. "I dunno's I do," he responded. "I'm pretty contented up here in the hills—with Melissy and all."

She nodded assent. "Yes, you're a Suncook. They're all that way—lovin' the hills. I took more after mother's side. She was a Poppleton. They liked level goin'. Three of 'em ran away to sea." She smiled grimly.

"The house would be yours sometime anyway," she went on after a moment. "I'm going to sell it to you cheap, an' on easy terms. I've got enough to live on,—John looked out for that." She rocked placidly back and forth for a minute.

Abner opened his lips to speak, but she stopped him with a little gesture. A look, half of shame and half of amusement, had crept into her face.

"I might's well tell you, Abner," she said with a grim smile. "I

hain't told a livin' soul. But you're a Suncook, same as me, an' I feel as if I'd got to tell somebody."

"What is it?" asked Abner. He moved forward in his chair.

She looked at him shrewdly. "You won't tell nobody?" she said.

He shook his head.

"Well, the first thing I'm goin' to have when I get down off the hills is an—autymobile."

She leaned back, triumphant.

Abner's eyes bulged feebly. He shifted them uneasily to the clock and then to the floor.

Aunt Nancy laughed happily. "Now you think I'm out of my head, don't you, Abner?"

He looked at her with sheepish guilt.

"But I ain't. I never was quite so sane in all my life. I've al'ays wanted, ever since I was born, to ride somethin' that went by itself. I've pulled horses up an' down these hills till I'm sick to death of it. I've al'ays set far forred on the seat an' breathed light so's not to weigh so much, an' I want to ride in somethin' I can lean back in an' weigh heavy 'fore I die—somethin' that I won't have to think all the time how tired it's gettin'." She nodded emphatically.

Abner snickered. "Seems kinder queer," he said safely.

"I s'pose it does. I don't see's other folks feel that way. I've watched 'em a good many times comin' up the orchard hill, an' they all lean back an' take it comf'table—the fat ones most of any," she added reflectively.

Abner smiled. "You could have your automobile up here," he ventured after a pause.

She shook her head. "'Twouldn't be it. Folks'd be running to the windows to talk, an' lookin' out an' sayin' I was crazy an' ought to be shut up. I'd rather pull horses till I die'n do that." She looked at him rebelliously.

Abner made no reply. He could think of none—no safe one.

Aunt Nancy continued to regard him shrewdly. "It use' to be a bicycle I wanted," she said slowly.

Abner started, and she laughed.

"I wanted one, first time I ever saw 'em," she went on. "It was one of them high ones with a little wheel in front, I saw it at a fair over to Charlemont. That must 'a' been thirty years ago an' more."

She sat lost in thought.

Abner eyed her cautiously.

"Women didn't ride 'em," she said, rousing herself. "I s'pose anybody'd thought I was crazy, sure, if I'd said I wanted to. I never told anyone. I remember, drivin' home that night, John said what foolish things they was. I didn't say anything." She sighed reminiscently.

"When I saw the new kind—an' women ridin' 'em—it did seem's if I couldn't wait any longer. That was twelve years ago, pretty near." She sighed again.

"An' now I see by the papers they don't use 'em so much. They're goin' by an' autymobiles is all the rage. If I don't get down pretty quick, I won't ever have a chance." She looked at him half pleadingly.

He stood up with an air of decision. "Well, Aunt Nancy, I don't understand how you feel," he said gently, "but I don't believe you're out of your head. And if you want Melissy an' me to take the house an' keep it for you, we'll do it. An' you can have it back on the same terms when you get tired of livin' down there an' want to come back to the hills."

"I sha'n't ever want to come back," she said simply, "not as long as I can have an autymobile an' ride in it down there."

### III.

"How's she feelin', Abner?"

Melissa was sitting before the big open fireplace, rocking gently back and forth and patting a long, white bundle that rested on her knees.

Abner came across to the fireplace and peered cautiously down at the bundle. "She asleep?" he whispered.

Melissa nodded proudly. She kept on patting the long, white clothes with slow, soft touch as she looked up at him. "How'd you find Aunt Nancy?" she asked again.

Abner looked thoughtfully into the fire. "She's doin' all right, I guess," he said slowly.

"I suppose her new things are pretty nice?" suggested Melissa. There was a mild curiosity in the round eyes.

"Yes, they're pretty nice, I guess,"—Abner's eyes travelled slowly around the big room,—“but they can't hold a candle to these—not 'cordin' to my notion.” His glance came back and rested contentedly on the white bundle.

Melissa smiled. "What sort of things are they?" she asked.

Abner reflected a moment. A smile crept into his face. "The only thing I seem to remember, for certain, is a big hanging lamp—as big around as the candle stand over there; an' it's got dangling glasses, all colors, hangin' to it."

Melissa's round eyes grew rounder. "Is it pretty?" she asked.

"Well, it's strikin'," said Abner guardedly. "Yes, she's got everything she said she'd have," he added after a moment, "Brussels carpet, an' patent rocker, an' the door-bell goes by 'lectricity, an' a nickel teapot."

Melissa sighed gently. "Is she happy, do you s'pose, Abner?" she asked.

Abner broke into a big laugh. "Happy!—You just ought to see her!" He chuckled. "I never saw anything like it. She's a new woman, I tell you. I didn't suppose it was in her. She goes chippering around and smiling. She's doin' something the whole, blessed time—a female missionary or a bargain sale or a church fair or something. I didn't see her more'n five minutes 't a time while I was there. She's got some kind of a new thing for her hair," he added thoughtfully. "It makes her look different—younger, I guess."

"What is it like?" Melissa leaned forward.

"Well, it kind o' stands up on the top an' comes out somewhere——"

"Is it black?"

He stared at her vaguely. "Well, I ain't quite sure," he said slowly.

"It's a cap, maybe," suggested Melissa.

He shook his head decisively. "No, it ain't a cap. I know a cap when I see it, I guess. It's a different kind of structure."

Melissa leaned back with a soft, impatient sigh.

Abner looked at her apologetically. "'Tain't so easy's you think to tell about them things—specially this one o' Aunt Nancy's." He gave a soft chuckle.

Melissa smiled. "Mebbe it's a rosette," she said.

Abner looked relieved. "I guess 'tis. That's a good name—a rosette."

"But you ain't sure, Abner?"

"No, I ain't sure."

There was silence. The old clock ticked loudly. The baby stretched out her small fingers and gave a sleepy wail.

Melissa set her upright and trotted her. "D' she ask about the baby?" she asked.

"Land, yes! She couldn't hear enough about her. She says maybe she'll come up an' make us a visit when snow comes—so's she can't use her automobile any longer."

Melissa's clutch on the white clothes tightened. "When—she can't—use her—automobile?" she repeated slowly.

Abner nodded. "She's got one. Goes out ridin' every day."

Melissa looked at him reproachfully. "How'd she ever learn?" she asked after a pause.

"Hired a man to run it for her awhile. Oh, she wa'n't no time. She's always wanted to—to do somethin' of the sort," said Abner discreetly.

The puckers faded from Melissa's forehead. "D' you go ridin' in it?" she asked with returning interest.

Abner paused. "Well, I went once," he said guardedly.

"Didn't you like it?"

"She drives middlin' fast."

Melissa nodded. "I should know she would. I can see her now." She straightened the baby's clothes and shook her gently.

"You have to set up kind o' straight," said Abner reflectively, "with nothin' to do—and look as if you didn't know folks was starin' from the sidewalks. It's kinder hard work."

"Don't Aunt Nancy mind?" asked Melissa wonderingly.

"Mind? She don't see 'em—or know it. She's so busy turnin' the crank an' enjoyin' herself she can't see anything. Has to look out for corners too," he added. "We went round corners—most of 'em—on two wheels."

Melissa shuddered. "I shouldn't think it'd be safe."

"Yes, it's safe, I guess,—for her. Other folks have to step lively." He chuckled. "One day when she was goin' pretty fast an' a policeman happened to see her she was taken up——" He stopped suddenly. There were some things it was just as well not to tell Melissa—and the baby.

"What'd you say?" demanded Melissa breathlessly.

"I said she was so taken up with the thing she never saw him. She's having a terrible good time," added Abner, switching the conversation back to the safe track.

"I don't see how she can," murmured Melissa. She raised her eyes doubtfully. "You don't s'pose she's out of her head, do you, Abner?"

He laughed cheerfully. "Not a mite. She's havin' the first good time of her life."

Melissa gave a faint sniff. Her mild face grew almost stern. "I shouldn't think 'twould be a very good time without any folks or Baby." She patted the bundle.

"She says it's a good deal like the New Jerusalem," responded Abner gravely. "There's a river flowing through it, you know, and it's level an' good wheelin'. And it's a city, so there's folks around to talk to an' look at."

Melissa looked down at the baby. Her eyes softened. "Poor Aunt Nancy. I don't s'pose we ever knew how she missed 'em," she said softly.

#### IV.

"ARE they comin', Abner?" Melissa looked up anxiously. Her round, placid face was tear-stained.

Abner stamped the snow from his boots. "They're on the way with her," he said slowly, drawing off his mittens. "I come on ahead to tell you, so's to have things ready."

"They're all ready. I've been keepin' 'em hot all the morning, ever since I got the word. Was she much hurt, Abner?"

Abner looked out of the window. He cleared his throat. Then he nodded without speaking.

Melissa's face grew awed. "Don't seem's if they ought to bring her way up here—in this snow." She glanced at the cold window. "It'll, likely, kill her."

"The doctor says nothin' will hurt her now," said Abner gruffly.

"Is she so bad?"

He nodded again without speaking.

Melissa sighed softly. "Poor Aunt Nancy! How'd it happen, Abner?"

"She got thrown out of her automobile—run into somethin' and upset."

"Her automobile! In the snow!"

"There ain't any snow down on the plain. She's been ridin' every day, right along. She was possessed about it,—wore a sweater, you know, an' thick things."

Melissa shook her head. "I can't seem to understand it, Abner—her actin' so."

"I can. She was a kind of child. I never see a child so tickled over anything as she was over that carriage thing when I was down there. She'd waited a good many years."

Melissa glanced hurriedly at the window. "They're coming," she said. "I must put in the other soapstone." She moved away to the bedroom, her eyes filling with quick tears.

When the slow procession came up the long, straight walk she was waiting at the door with a smiling face.

A pair of black eyes looked up from the bundled figure on the stretcher.

Melissa bent over it tenderly.

"How-de-do, Melissy?" The muffled voice came faintly out of the wrappings. "It ain't very level goin' up here."

Melissa's mouth quivered, but her eyes smiled. "It's pretty hilly, isn't it, Aunt Nancy?" She spoke in a loud voice, as if to a deaf person. "Bring her in this way," she said to the men, lowering her voice.

They stamped the snow from their feet and crossed the sitting-room to the bedroom door.

The keen, black eyes from their wrappings darted at each familiar object as they passed.

Half an hour later, propped up in the big four-poster, Aunt Nancy beamed cheerfully upon the room.

"Looks pretty comfortable, don't it?" she said.

Melissa nodded.

Aunt Nancy looked at her sharply. The black eyes twinkled. "Now, don't you feel bad, Melissy Suncook," she said quaintly, "I'm

going to have a real comfortable dying, I guess. I always did think I should like this bed to die in."

Melissa looked at her with a little awe. "Don't you feel any pain, Aunt Nancy?" she asked.

"Not a mite. I'm paralyzed up to here." There was an accent of pride in her voice as she laid her wrinkled hand on her heart.

"'Twon't be many days, the doctor says. The hills look real good, don't they." Her glance strayed to the window, where the mountains rose, blue and hazy, in the soft light. Her eyes dwelt on them with a look of content. "There ain't anything in the world just like 'em, is there?" she said gently, "but they do make it dreadful hard goin'—'specially for horses. You didn't expect I'd be coming up here like this?" She turned quickly to look at her niece.

Melissa shook her head.

"I al'ays knew I should come back," said Aunt Nancy. "I knew I'd come back—if I could get here—to die. I wanted to go to sleep in the hills. They're a good place to sleep." She smiled faintly.

She turned her face to the pillow with a sigh. "I guess I'll take a nap," she said slowly. "When I wake up you can bring the baby in to see me—I always did—love babies—and folks."



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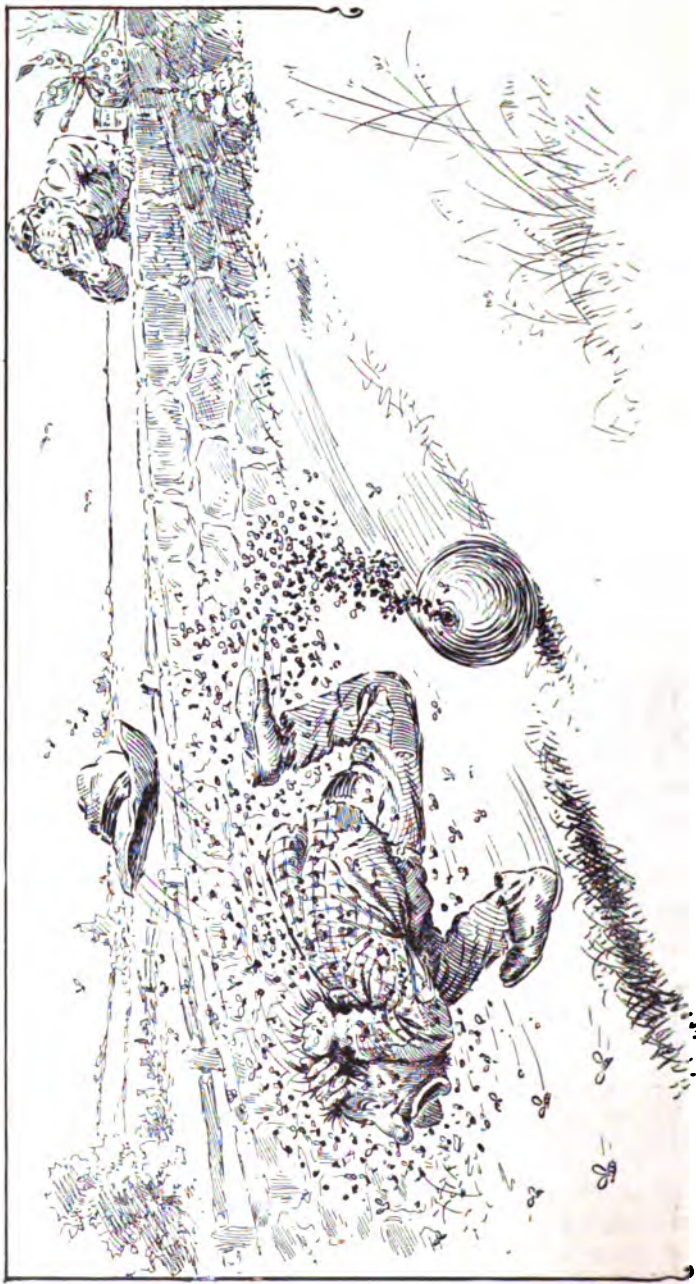
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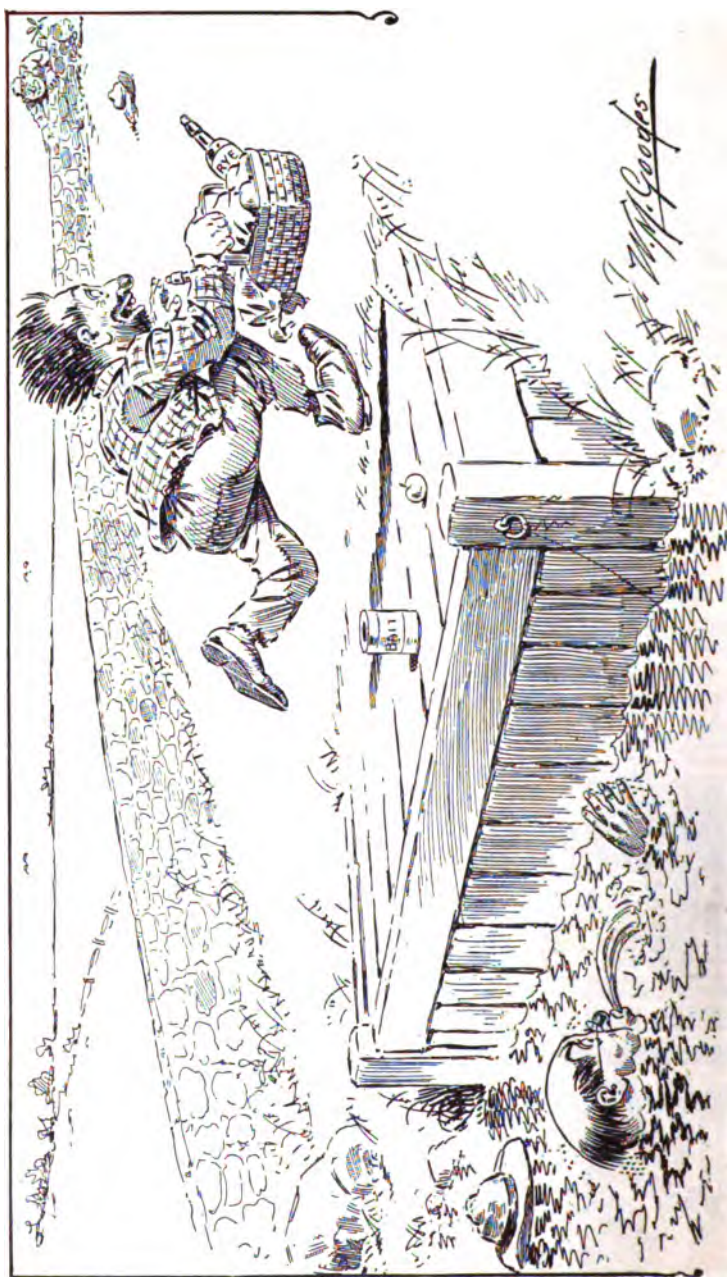
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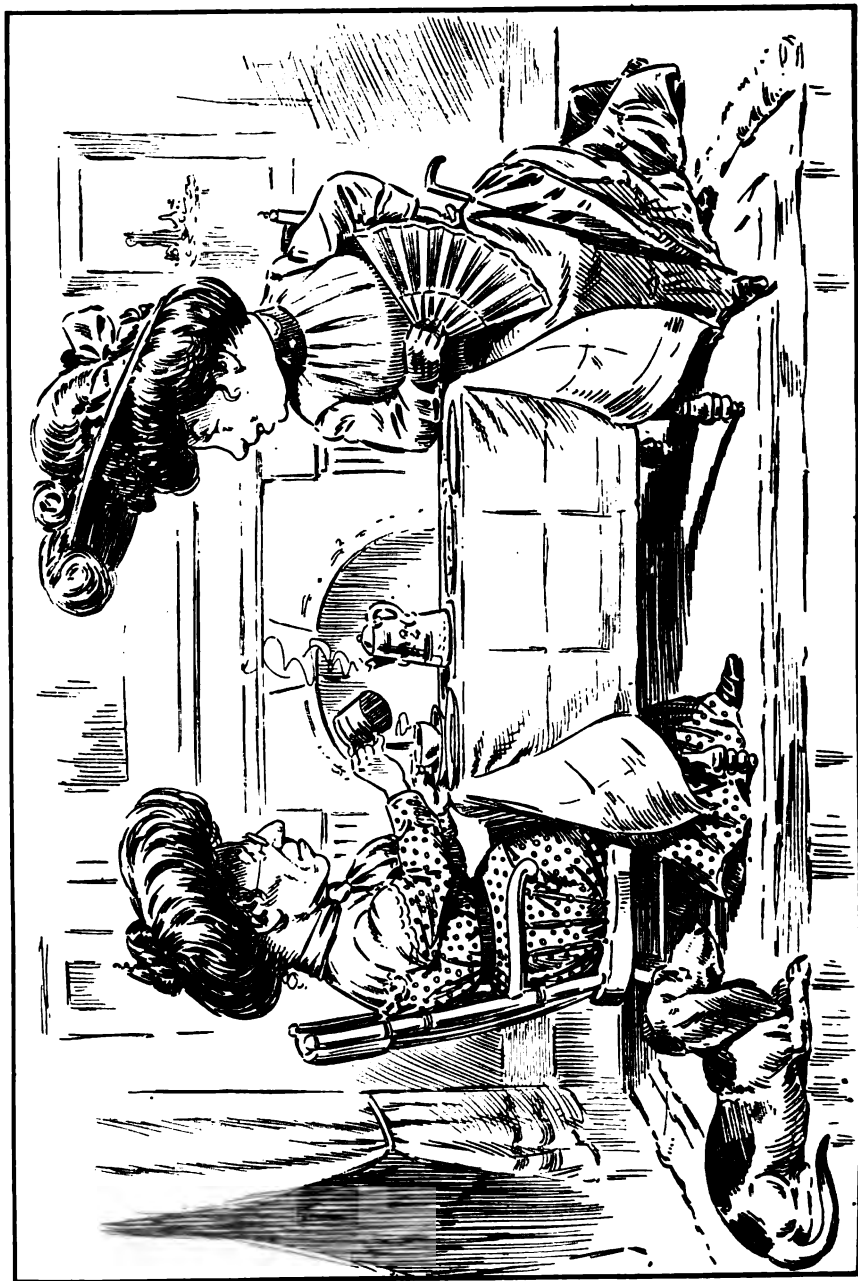


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Women Specialists  
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**COCAINE MORPHINE OPIUM**  
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harmless Home Cure. Address

MISS MARY N. BALDWIN, Box 1212, Chicago, Ill.

ORE EYES Dr. ISAAC THOMPSON'S EYE WATER



TOO MUCH FOR MOTHER-IN-LAW.—Continued.



JOHN (outside).—"I'll just drop it in the room and let it get accustomed to the surroundings before I tell Mary. Maybe she won't be surprised when she sees it."



## THE SECRET OF A GOOD COMPLEXION

### TO ALL WOMEN WHO DESIRE BEAUTY.

Until further notice we will send you a 30-day daily treatment of Dr. Campbell's Safe Arsenic Complexion Wafers and a 30-day daily treatment of Fould's Medicated Arsenic Soap FOR ONE DOLLAR.

These world famous preparations are a never failing remedy for bad blood, pimples, freckles, blackheads, moth patches, liver spots, acne, redness of face or nose, wrinkles, dark rings under the eyes, and all other blemishes, whether on the face, neck, arms, or body. They brighten and beautify the complexion as no other remedies on earth can, and they do it in a very short time. They impart to the complexion the most exquisite fairness, make the skin clear, soft, and velvety. Until further notice we will send you the wafers and soap as stated above for \$1.00. After this offer is withdrawn the price will be \$1.00 for the wafers and 50c. for the soap. Address or call on

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Sold by Druggists Everywhere.

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"Oh, What Rest and Comfort!"



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Improved Instep Arch Supporter for FLAT-FOOT.

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### Tablets FOR THIN-BLOODED PEOPLE.

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TOO MUCH FOR MOTHER-IN-LAW.—Continued.



MOTHER.—"Good Heaven! the wretch!"

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## THE OVERLAND LIMITED MOST LUXURIOUS TRAIN IN THE WORLD

Leaving Chicago 8 p. m. every day and reaching San Francisco in less than three days.

*The best of everything.*  
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THE O. & W. THUM CO., MFRS.  
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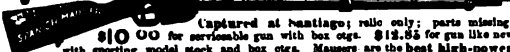
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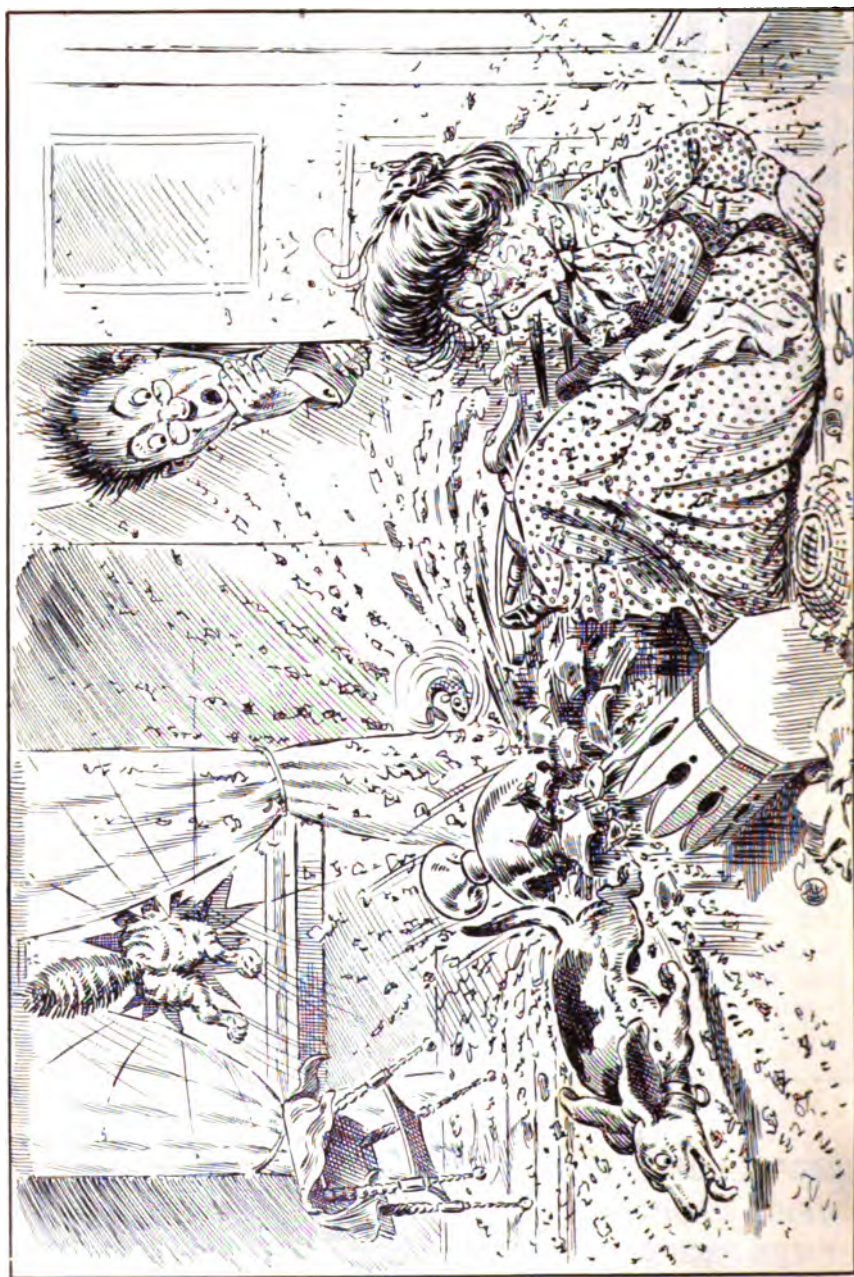
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TOO MUCH FOR MOTHER-IN-LAW.—Continued.



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JOHN.—“Don’t go away, mother. I really didn’t know you were in the room. I was only getting up a little surprise for Mary.”

MOTHER.—“Wretch, I’ll never cross your threshold again!”

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EASY RUNNING

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SAVE MONEY AND TROUBLE  
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TRIED AND TRUE  
is far and away superior to any bicycle for the very good reason that it is radically different. The CUSHION FRAME... the HUB COASTER BRAKE... the CENTER DRIVEN PERFECT GEARS, and the SPRING FORK which cushions the handlebar... combine to make rough roads smooth and place the PIERCE CHAINLESS in a class above all others.  
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STRATEGY.



ЕРН.—“I’d laik to hab some ob dem melons, but I’sе askeered de dawg’s ‘roun’ somewhar; howsumeber, I’ll see what I kin do.

# THE INTERNAL BATH

## MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE EXTERNAL

If external cleanliness is essential to health, how much more important is internal cleanliness! Every disease arises from the retention of waste and foreign matter in the system—Nature's drainage being clogged. In the vast majority of cases the clogging is in the colon or large intestine. Positively the one harmless and efficient means of clearing away this waste is the internal bath given with the

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This treatment is a sovereign remedy for and prevention of 90 per cent. of all Digestive derangements. It is hygienic, scientific, and logical. It is a perfect tonic with no after depression. Its action

**PREVENTS AND CURES APPENDICITIS, BILIIOUSNESS, DYSPEPSIA, OBESITY, HEADACHES, CONSTIPATION, AND ALL MALARIAL DISEASES**

Have you read of the wonderful cures made by the Internal Bath? Do you know that it goes to the root of all disease and eradicates the cause? Do you know that many of the greatest physicians of the world endorse and prescribe this treatment? Do you know that such eminent people as the following use the Internal Bath: U. S. Senator A. P. Gorman, Maryland; Ex-Governor Goodell, Vermont; Admiral Tyrtoff, St. Petersburg, Russia; Col. A. O. Granger, Girard Building, Philadelphia, Pa.; Gen. T. S. Peck, G. A. R.; Miles Devine, Chicago, Ill.; Marguerite Sylva, and a host of others?

Were it possible to reproduce here our file of voluntary letters of commendation received from prominent people who do not ordinarily permit the use of their names in advertisements, no doubt could exist in one's mind as to the extraordinary merit of the "J. B. L. Cascade" treatment. As proof of what the Cascade treatment will do we call your attention to the following letter from H. A. Joyce, one of the prominent merchants of Cambridge, Md.

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H. A. JOYCE.

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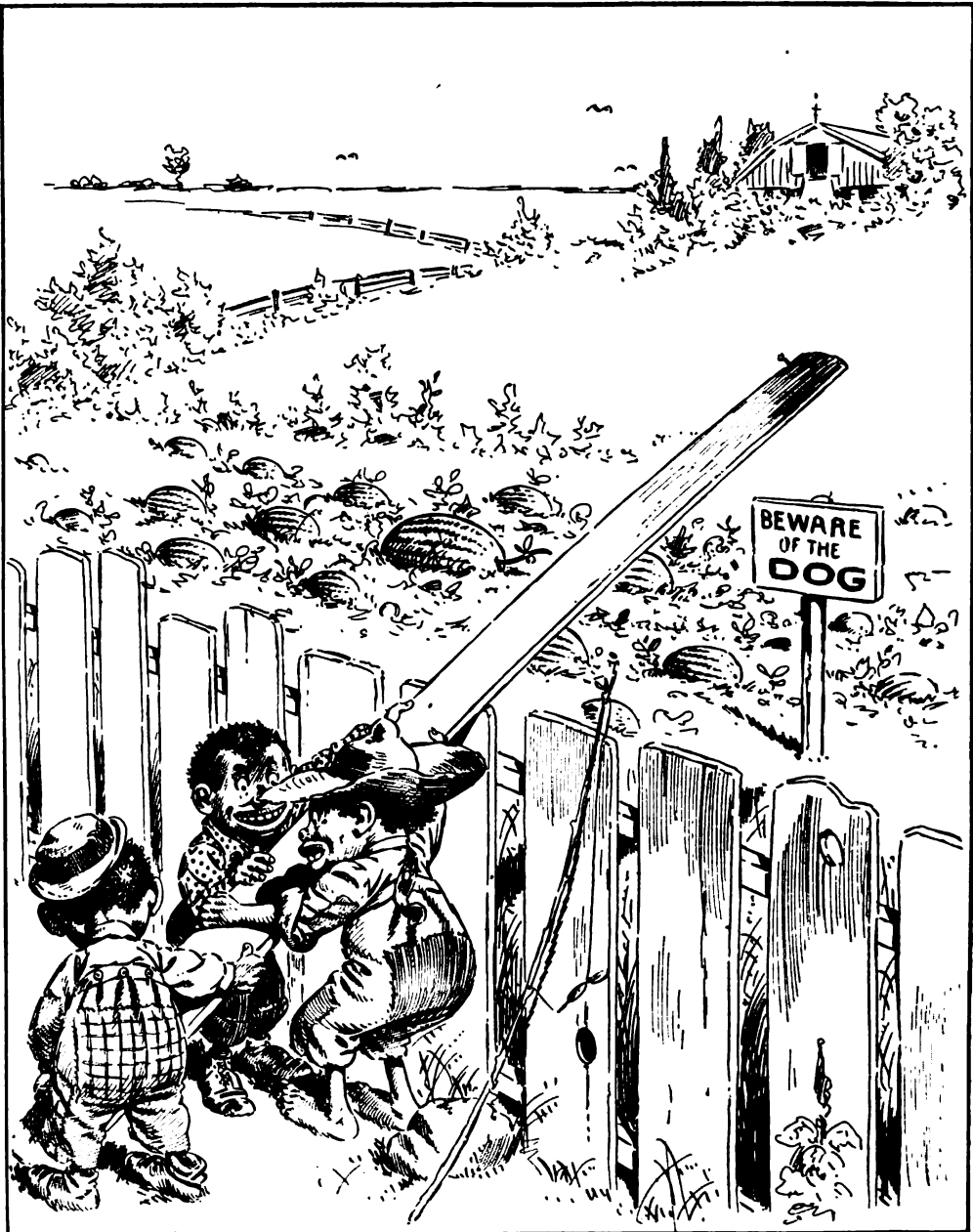
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STRATEGY.—Continued.



"Now's soon's I git out on de end, den yous put dis rock back ob me on de boad to hol' it down; den yous kin look frough de fence an' watch fo' de dawg.

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by introducing an ELECTRIC LIGHTED train  
throughout, "THE OVERLAND LIMITED,"  
with Compartment Observation Cars, having  
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This famous train reaches Salt Lake City  
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Full information cheerfully furnished on  
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Omaha, Nebraska.

STRATEGY.—Continued.



"Golly, dat's de bigges' one in de patch! It's lucky I had dis fishen'-line along to hook up de wine wiv. Now all I got to do is yank it up."

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## BORATED TALCUM



# TOILET POWDER

Delightful After Bathing. A Luxury After Shaving. Beautifies and Preserves the Complexion.

A positive relief for PRICKLY HEAT, CHAFING and SUN-BURN, and all afflictions of the skin. For sore, blistered and sweaty feet it has no equal. Removes all color of perspiration. Get MENNEN'S (the original), a little higher in price, perhaps, than worthless substitutes, but there is a reason for it.

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THE NEW INVENTION

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ORE LIVES DR. J. S. THOMPSON'S EYE WATER

STRATEGY.—Continued.



RUFUS, RASTUS.—“Look out, Eph, look out! dere comes de dawg!”  
EPH.—“Yep, I sees 'eem, but hee's a-mos'—

# THE Keeley Cure

**Alcohol,  
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Using**

Produce each a disease having definite pathology. The disease yields easily to the treatment as administered at the following Keeley Institutes:

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STRATEGY.—Concluded.



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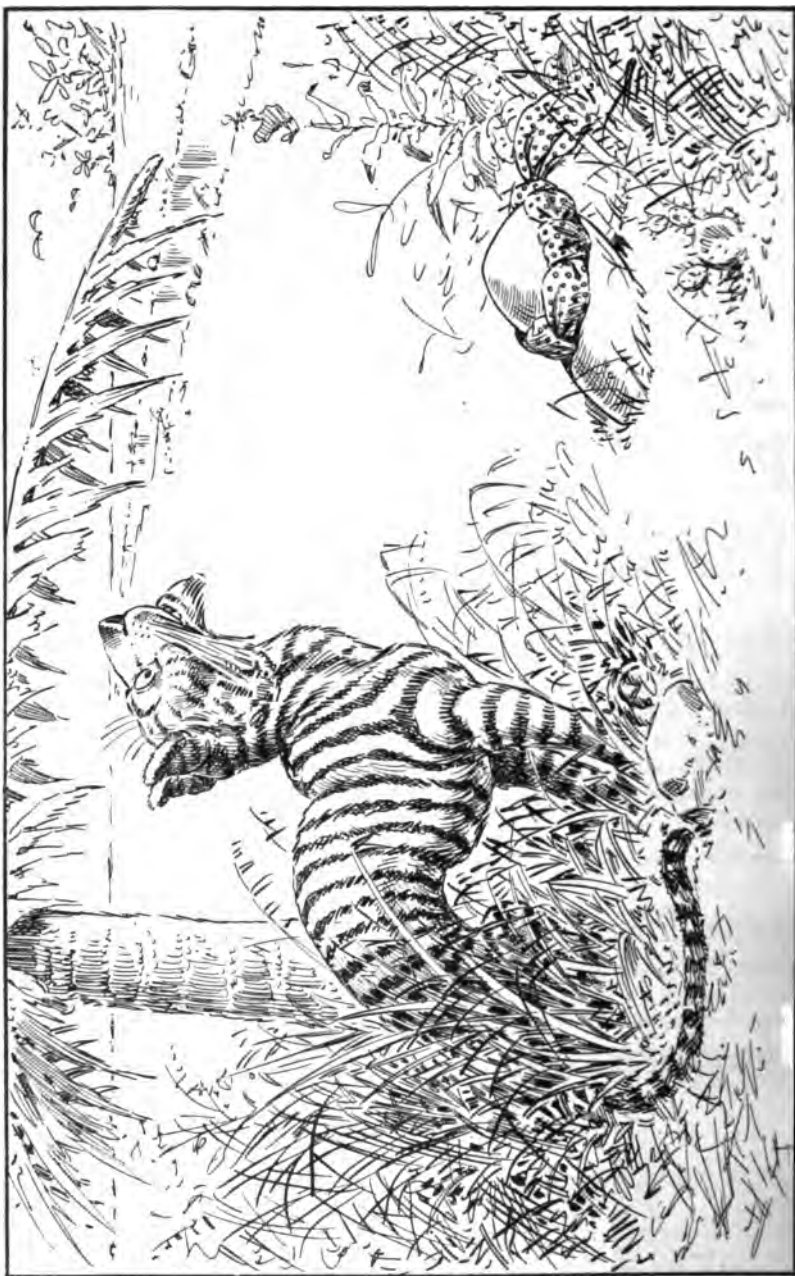
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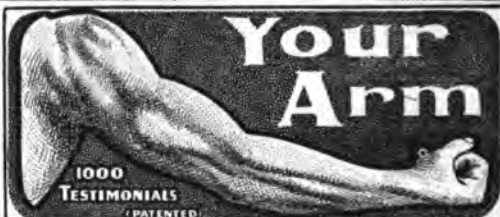
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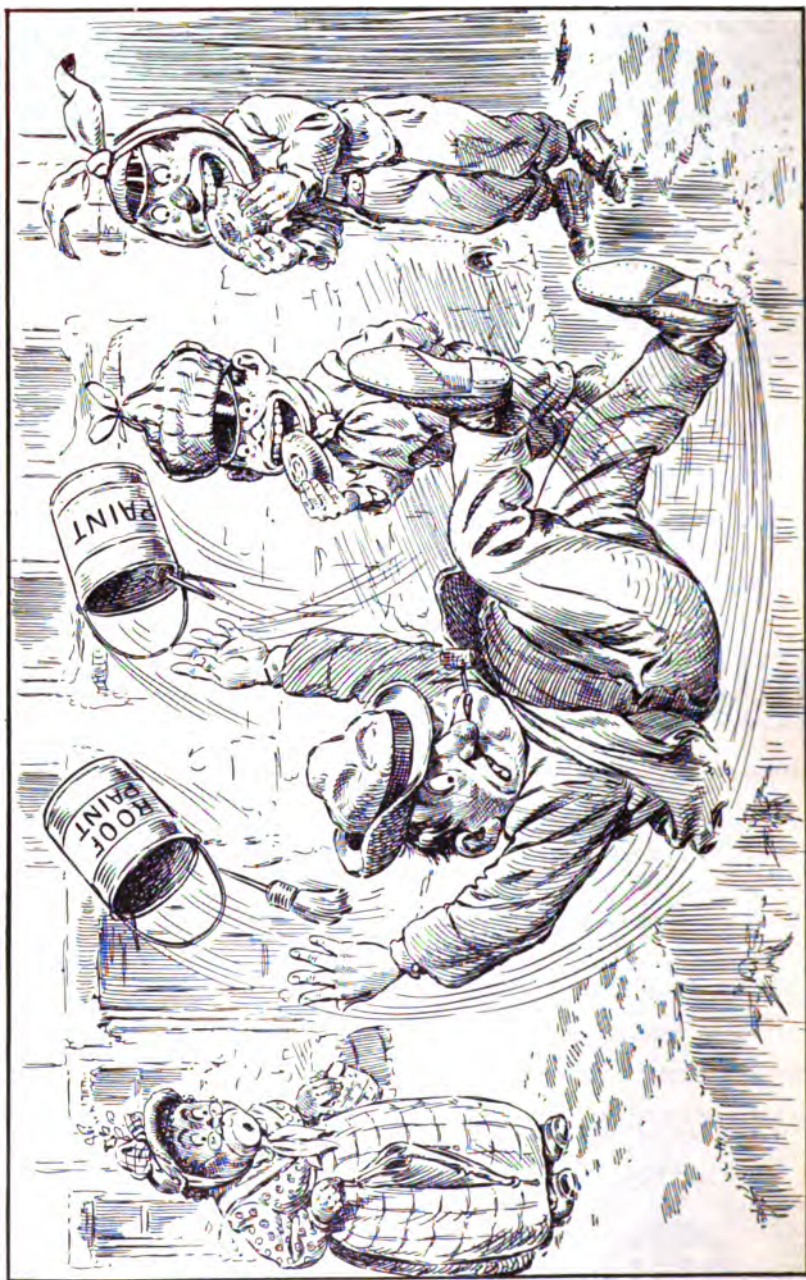
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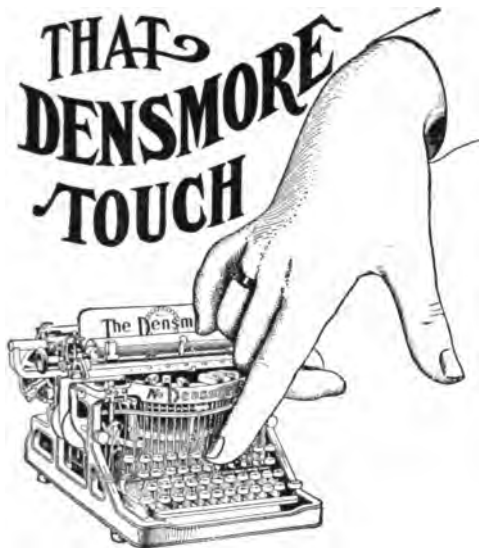


THE GOOD SAMARITANS.—Continued.



MAMMY.—“Now, jes’ look at dat! Ain’t dat a shame?”

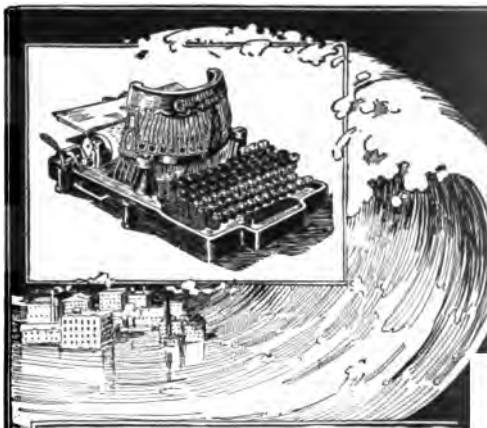
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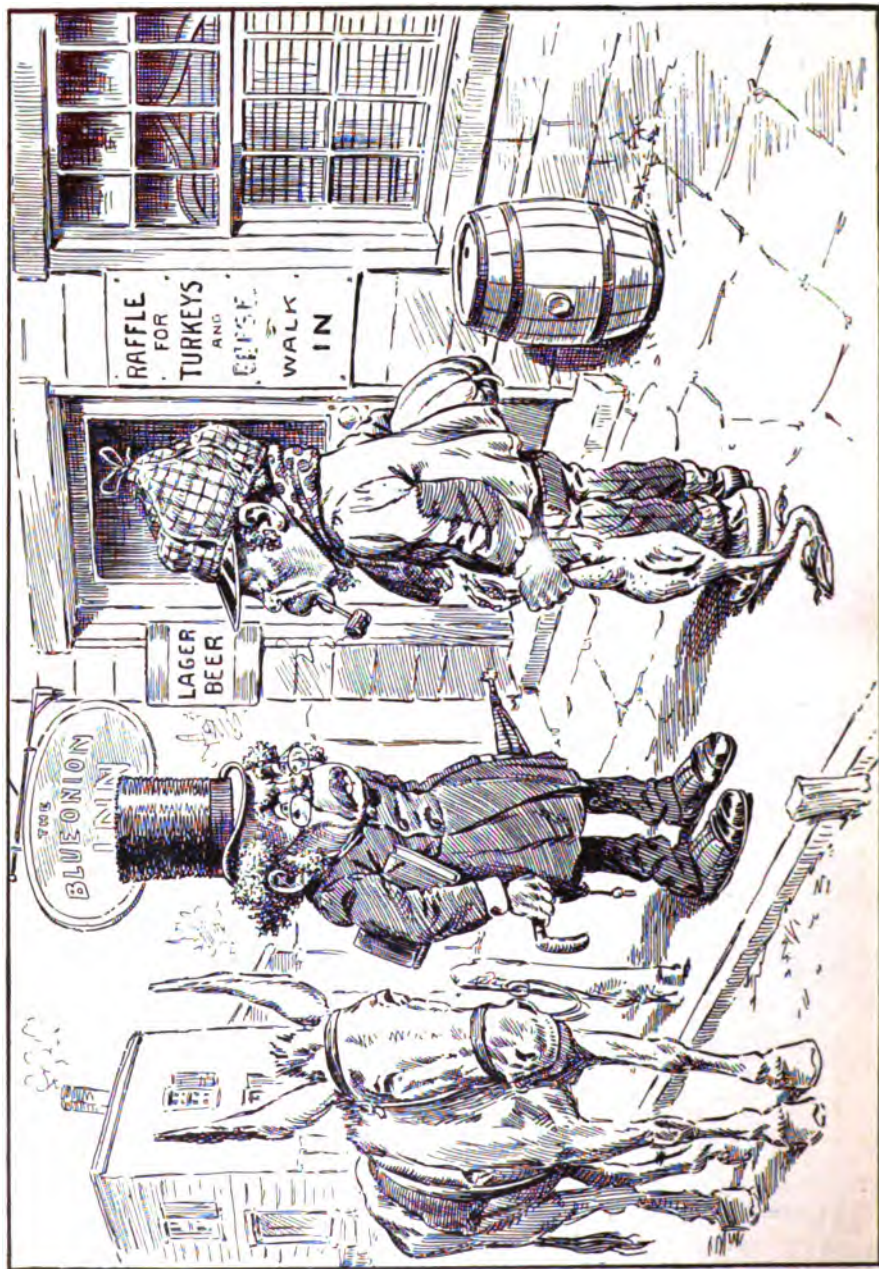
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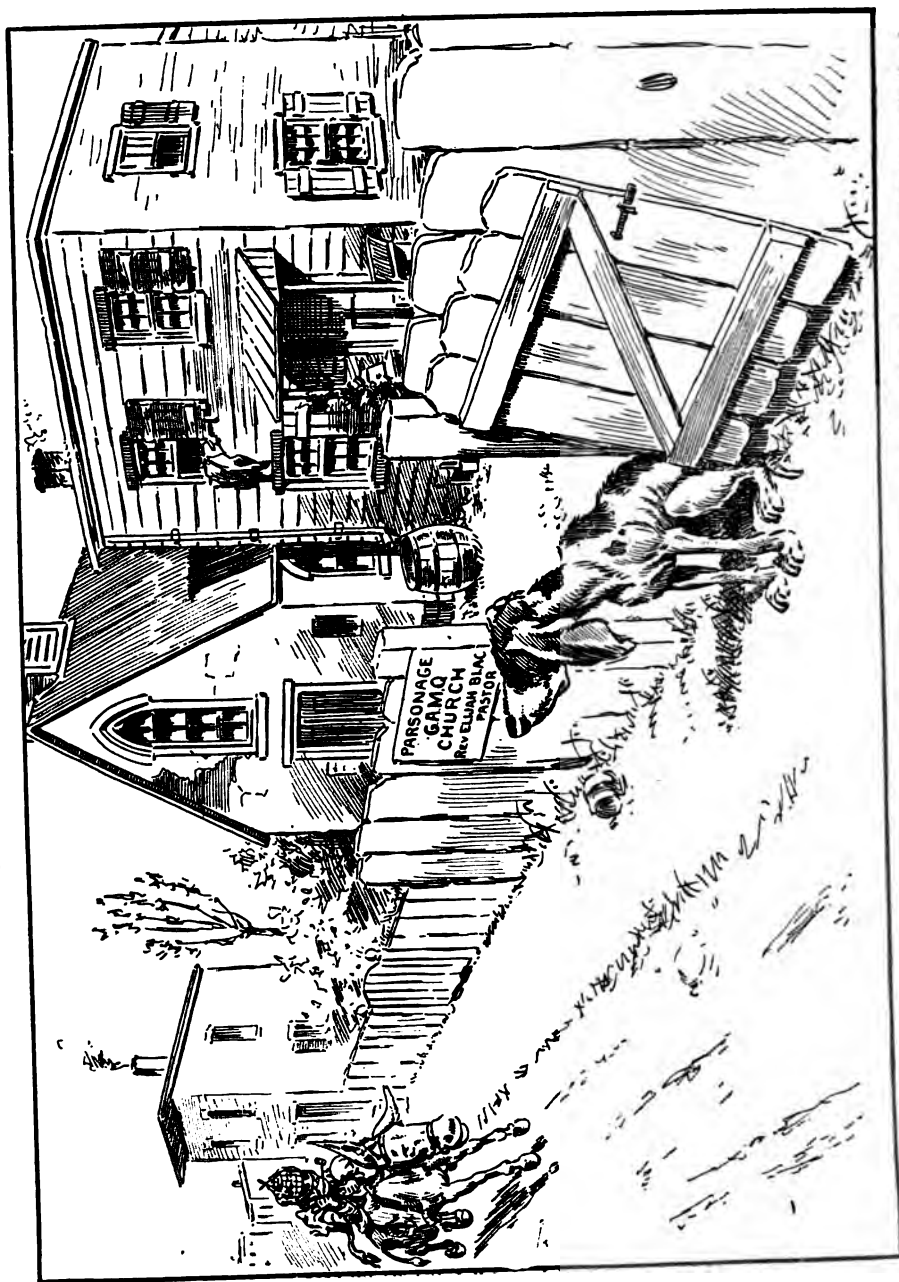
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You can tell if you have consumption by the coughing and hawking, by continually spitting, especially in the morning, when you throw yellow and black matter, by bleeding from the lungs, night sweats, flat chest, fever, weak voice, peculiar flushed complexion, pain in chest, wasting away of the flesh, etc. Find out how the Copper Cure kills the germs, then builds up the lungs, strengthens the heart, puts flesh on the body and muscle on the bones, until the consumption is all gone and you are again a strong, healthy, robust man or woman.

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So don't give up hope, and don't spend your money in travel. Attend to it right away, for consumption spreads to other members of your family. If you have consumption or fear you are predisposed to it, write to-night to the Kalamazoo Tuberculosis Remedy Co., 444 Main street, Kalamazoo, Mich., and they will send you illustrated and scholarly books free of charge, telling you fully how the Copper Cure will cure you in your own home in a very short time.

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# About Books and Authors.

## Paul L. Ford's Biggest Work.

The death of Paul Leicester Ford has brought attention afresh to perhaps the most important, and certainly the most entertaining and interesting, of his historical contributions, the study of Washington as a man, which he wrote under the title "The True George Washington." This volume was the first of a series originated by J. B. Lippincott Company, which has been continued in the succeeding volumes, respectively on Franklin and Penn., by Sydney George Fisher, and "The True Thomas Jefferson," by William Eleroy Curtis, and the demand for them has been so marked as to indicate not only universal interest in the personality and private life of the builders of the great Republic, but a special liking for the simple yet comprehensive plan of treatment which these books follow. The interest in the book has been cumulative, and the sales of "The True Thomas Jefferson" might be taken to suggest that the Sage of Monticello is almost as popular an American figure as Washington. The publishers have made extensive preparations for the continuance of this series, and "True Biographies" of Lincoln, Andrew Jackson, Webster, and Clay, by distinguished American writers, are already arranged for, while other notable men will receive attention in several books for which negotiations are now proceeding.

## South Sea Island Life.

In the sketch of a South Sea Island trader's station in the last number of *Lippincott's Magazine*, Mrs. Churchill has supplied a realistic picture of the actual life of the waifs and strays of civilization who have chosen the more ignoble career of companionship with the savage islanders. From the time of Captain Cook it has been so much the fashion to idealize the South Sea Islanders in a glamour of romance that these accurate pencillings of the reality under the romance will be a welcome corrective. Mrs. Churchill has had abundant opportunity to become familiar with the subject, for her early years were passed almost wholly upon the Pacific islands and shores. As to Samoa, in which this story is laid, her familiarity with the facts could not be other than complete, for, during her husband's term as Consul-General in Samoa she was a close observer throughout the troubled times of rebellion and disloyalty eager for combat that culminated in the recent war and the final partition which gave to the United States its far southern outlying possession in American Samoa. These observations and experiences Mrs. Churchill has elaborated in many sketches in the newspapers and magazines during the war time and will include in her speedily forthcoming volume on Samoa, "Uma," which will be a record or the real Samoa. The scene of this graphic sketch of island commerce in *Lippincott* is laid on the shore of the strait which separates German and American Samoa. Its distant prospect is backed by the loom of the American land of Tutuila and the blue shapes of the lofty mountains which shut in the magnificent harbor of Pago-Pago, whose possession in itself has given the United States far the better of the bargain in the division of this remote and petty kingdom, where the bickerings of a Malietoa kinglet and puny rebels of the Mata'afa and Tamasese name have been exaggerated into affairs of world politics. Mrs. Churchill's sketch shows plainly how petty is the life of the white beach-comber and brown-skinned swaggering chief.

## How Fish Look in Action.

The most remarkable pictures of fish in action which have yet appeared, are included in the volume "The Giant Fish of Florida," by J. Turner-Turner, which J. B. Lippincott Company have just published. This book by an ardent fisherman and naturalist, recounts experiences in tackling the biggest and gamiest fighters against which the salt water fisherman has a chance to exercise his strength and skill, and is full of information as well as entertainment. The part which deals with tarpon fishing is especially suggestive. How Mr. Turner secured his remarkable pictures is not the least interesting feature of his book, yet he has reproduced the effect of great fish swimming beneath the surface of the sea—which it would be impossible to obtain in actuality—with a likeness to life and an action which are absolutely convincing, and this without employing a single mounted specimen.

## Miss Caroline Gebhardt.

"I have had such an uneventful life," writes Miss Caroline Gebhardt, who was a contributor to a recent number of *Lippincott's Magazine*, "that I am considerably at loss to pick out any incidents that can possibly be of interest to your magazine or its readers. I was born and have always lived a few miles from Louisville. "A Real Daughter of the Revolution" is my first literary effort, and I was inspired to write it, I suppose, by the fact that, at the time I began it, historical novels seemed to be monopolizing popular attention and by the further fact that my ancestors, both of New Jersey and Virginia, had played their part in the war of the Revolution, for, although my name is German, my people like to consider themselves very American."

## The Inspiration of a Great Shakespeare Scholar.

"I was a boy in my teens," says Dr. Horace Howard Furness, the editor of the Variorum Edition of Shakespeare of which the thirteenth volume, "Twelfth Night," has just been published by J. B. Lippincott Company, "when I heard Mrs. Kemble read it, but from that moment I belonged to Shakespeare. She could have won any one to the love and study of his perfect verse. It is not possible now to separate the beauty of the text from the beauty of the reader, but neither is it necessary to try. The result was there, and that was enough—that sweet, dark-browed woman, with her expressive eyes and telling voice, putting life and her own gracious personality into the words that had been written two hundred years before. I never missed a chance to hear her, nor one when I might reread for myself what I had heard from her platform.

"Later, I joined a Shakespeare society, formed here under her inspiration, and we commenced to work in earnest. Soon we found we were threshing old wheat. The editors we were reading repeated not only each other, but themselves. Even the "Variorum" of 1821 helped us very little, as we found it did not embody the findings of all the editors who had studied and written before that date. In short, we realized we had no adequate text to work with; and in my enthusiasm and temerity I decided to attempt to prepare one myself. I was never so frightened in my life as I was when I had got actually to work, and I shall never forget how we all worried over the details—whether the page should be of folio or quarto size, whether the notes should be at the bottom of the pages or collected at the back—and I dare say we had twenty proof-sheets, of one kind and another, pulked for the first few pages before we could make up our minds."

## TWO NOTABLE BOOKS



**P**ING PONG, or Table Tennis, as its votaries prefer to style it, has captured the English-speaking world, and on all sides, in clubs, hotels, and private houses, is heard the "ping," "pong" of the ball on the vellum-surfaced racquet which gave the game its original name. Though it has sprung into prominence only during the last couple of years, it was played in a crude form some time ago, but dropped temporarily out of sight, to be revived only by an accident. Now it claims its thousands of enthusiasts on both sides of the Atlantic, organized into clubs upon clubs, with its inter-club play and its tournaments, one of which at least, held in London, was accorded national importance in British sports. The formation of an Association is an established fact in Great Britain, and that body is now engaged in formulating definitive rules which may be universally adopted.

**A Handbook to Ping Pong.**

Several factors combine to render Table Tennis emphatically a "popular" sport in the best sense of the word—a sport which not only appeals to all tastes, but which requires such a moderate outlay as to be accessible to practically all pocket-books. "Owing to its easy adaptability to existing circumstances, Table Tennis has, in general popularity, far exceeded that of Billiards or any other indoor game," write the authors. "A pastime in which skill, control of temper, and moderate exercise are so well combined would be difficult indeed to find. Although originally scoffed at and held in contempt by the votaries of football, cricket, lawn tennis, and other athletic sports, the game has already among its enthusiastic adherents well-known sportsmen. Altogether, Table Tennis is daily making such enormous strides that it may be quite looked for in the future to become one of our national games, and it is probable that developments will take place of which even those playing have no conception.

"All that is necessary for this fascinating game is a good-sized table, a fair amount of room at both ends and sides, a pair of bats or racquets, a celluloid ball, and a net to stretch across the table at a height of three-quarters of an inch to each foot of table length, suspended on a couple of posts so clamped to the table that the net will project some three or four inches on each side. There are two players, one at each end of the table. Tersely stated, the object of the game is for one player to so strike the ball over the net to the other player that the latter is unable to return it.

"We have here a game which is in the reach of almost every one to play, and in which ladies, gentlemen, and children are almost on an

equality. It is easily learnt, and reasonable proficiency, provided the player has a correct eye, is soon attained. No special apartment is required, and the implements are all inexpensive. It has one very great advantage in that players may play in their homes without upsetting existing arrangements, and as moderate exercise only is necessitated, it forms a most healthy amusement for after dinner. It is quite unnecessary to be a champion to enjoy playing, as the game has a fascination peculiarly its own, but for those who wish to attain higher proficiency clubs offer an unlimited field of attainment."

The "Handbook," by the noted players, M. J. G. Ritchie and Walter Harrison, contains a history and a description of the game, a discussion of the Methods of Play, the Rules as at present formulated, a discussion of the Leading Strokes, directions for Tournament Play and International Matches, and a description of the Accessories of the Game.



BRIEFLY stated, the purpose of Dr. Edward P. Davis's sterling handbook is to answer the "What?" the "Why?" and the "How?" that so constantly beset the mother in doing her duty towards **Mother and Child.** her child. As he says, the book "is not intended to supply prescriptions for medicines nor to take the place of the family physician. It is designed to help him in the care of his patients by placing at their disposal information which physicians commonly give to their patients. The physical prosperity of mothers and children is so largely dependent upon the faithful observance of simple precautions, that anything which gives information regarding this care cannot fail to be useful. The form of the present edition of the book has been largely suggested to the writer by the needs of his own practice, and embraces much advice which he usually gives to his patients."

It follows, then, that it is written without technicalities, in language understood of the people, and that its directions are sufficiently thorough and withal simple to tide the mother over many of the anxieties and perplexities incidental to motherhood.

In treating of "The Mother," the author deals with her needs and well-being both before and during confinement, until her complete restoration to health. Besides the more strictly medical phases, the hygienic conditions—as to dress, diet, exercise, and manner of living generally—best calculated to a favorable confinement are detailed, upon his stated principle that "the physical prosperity largely depends upon a faithful observance of simple precautions."

The larger portion of the book, however, deals with "The Child," through a series of seventeen chapters: *The Cradle*, treating of the sleeping-accommodations for the infant; *The Child's Clothing*; *Formation of Milk*, and its effect upon the infant, the time and best methods for nursing, and so on; *Artificial Feeding*, by the wet-nurse, by some form of modified, pasteurized, or sterilized milk, or on a mixed

diet, with a consideration of children's food; *Air and Exercise*; *The Nursery*; *The Healthy Child*, the characteristics by which health is recognized, and the conditions and care necessary to preserve health during the child's development; *The Care, Education, and Moral Development of the Child during Its Crisis of Development*, treating of the gradual intellectual and moral awakening to keep pace with the physical progress; *The Signs of Illness in Children*, as regards infection, contagion, eruptions, and so on, the child's expressions of disease, and the signs of chronic disease; *Nursing Sick Children*, directions for nursing various forms of disease, with a discussion of the question, "Shall the mother nurse the child?" *Infectious and Contagious Diseases*, the methods by which contagion and infection are conveyed, avoidance, symptoms, isolation, and general nursing; *The Conveyance of Contagion and Infection*, fumigation, disinfection, etc.; *Medical Emergencies*, poisoning and its prevention and counteraction, convulsions, heat-stroke, nose-bleed, etc.; *Surgical Emergencies*, cuts, burns, breaks, sprains, and the like; *External Applications*, of heat, cold, baths, etc.; *Asepsis and Antisepsis*; and *Inoculation and Vaccination*. A valuable Dietary, with recipes for various foods, rounds out an exceedingly complete and useful volume.

As to the authoritative character of the book, reference need only be made to the eminent professional standing of the author, and to the fact that the original edition (this being the second, revised and enlarged) had the benefit of the collaboration of the late Dr. John M. Keating, whose "Cyclopædia of the Diseases of Children" is the recognized authority on the subject.



THE eminent dermatologist, Dr. George Henry Fox, is the author of "A Practical Treatise on Smallpox," with the collaboration of S.

**Other Recent Medical Works.** Dana Hubbard, M.D., Sigmund Pollitzer, M.D., and John H. Huddleston, M.D. The "Treatise" is in the form of a photographic atlas, containing ten colored

plates, representing typical cases of Variola in its successive stages, and six black and white photographic plates, showing unusual phases of Variola, Vaccinia, Varicella, and diseases with which smallpox is liable to be confounded; there are forty-three illustrations in all. The accompanying text is brief and eminently practical in character, treating of the symptoms and course of the disease, the characteristic points of diagnosis, and the approved methods of treatment. There is also a chapter on Vaccination, treating of the technique, the complications incidental to vaccination, and the method of obtaining the most trustworthy virus.

"Whenever a physician is called to a case of suspected smallpox, he confronts a grave responsibility," writes Dr. Fox. "If young or without special experience, he is apt to feel a sore need of assistance, and although a book can never take the place of an experienced consultant, it is the object of the present work to render him as much aid as

possible. The text aims to be practical rather than elaborate. The plates are reproductions of photographs from life, some of which have been obtained under great difficulty.

"While many articles on variola have been illustrated by a few photographs of cases, mostly of the pustular type, this work is believed to be the first which has presented illustrations of the smallpox eruption in each of its successive stages. It is sincerely hoped that the reader will find it of service in familiarizing him with the peculiar features of the disease."



"THE ARTIFICIAL FEEDING OF INFANTS," by Charles F. Judson, M.D., and J. Claxton Gittings, M.D., is an exhaustive study, giving a clear exposition of the methods in practical use for the care and preparation of milk for the infant. Milk modification is fully explained, with an important presentation of the various methods of feeding in vogue at home and abroad, a statement of the different theories advocated, an explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of sterilization and pasteurization, and very important chapters on mother's milk, cow's milk, and digestion, allowing the greatest possible latitude for the variation and dietetic requirements of every individual case.



I AM writing this in instalments, with a burnt match upon the  
Cell 4-11-44 pasteboard cases which each day enclose my charlotte-russe. Let  
me explain that our prison is under the protection of the Young  
Ladies' Visiting Association, and whereas in most prisons the inmates are sup-  
posed to get their deserts, here we really *do*.

My dessert, served three times a day, is charlotte-russe. My neighbor on  
the tier above, a convicted murderer, has ice-cream. However, until the exact  
status of my offence is decided upon I shall have to be content with charlotte-  
russe, vanilla flavoring. Anyway, I need the pasteboard.

My location is Tier 4, Row 11, Cell 44. I believe that this is the insane  
ward, for I have been told that I am charged with being a dangerous golfo-  
maniac. Whether or not I am justly accused I leave the public to judge.

When I joined the Hole-High Golf Club I had no thought that I ever  
should be charged with menacing the safety of society. I paid my dues  
promptly, bought all the clubs that our professional could supply, patronized  
the caddies liberally, and, finding that my play was interfering with my busi-  
ness, in the interest of my clients gave up my law practice in favor of the  
golf practice.

In short, I endeavored to be consistent.

Fortunately, golf did not a whit intrude upon my domestic relations.  
After moving out upon the links (which I did soon after I joined the club)  
my wife and I continued to live very happily with what income she had from  
a timely legacy. Had it not been for the legacy we might have suffered con-  
siderable inconvenience because of my withdrawal from office work.

Of more importance, even, than the legacy was the fact that we were well  
adapted one to the other. Most wives would have objected to their husband's  
rising in the night, and with an umbrella trying to whack the little brass balls  
off the tops of the bedposts, or with a spoon absent-mindedly lofting a soft-  
boiled egg across the breakfast-table, or with his cane clipping all the tulip-  
buds along either side of the garden-walk. But not my wife! Herself a  
devotee of ping-pong, she understood. We agreed to occupy separate sleeping-  
apartments, so as not to collide and wake each other up in the midst of our  
dreamland tourneys; but this is as far as any division went.

Our mutual sympathy was perfect. When I was not telling about my golf  
I was willing to hear her talk about her ping-pong; and when she was not  
talking about her ping-pong she was ready to listen to me tell about my golf.  
Ere she left in the morning early to attend her ping-pong parties she put me  
up a nice lunch, which I ate while upon the course; and in case she did not  
return for dinner at night I did not mind, because usually I was so tired that  
I went right to bed. Even did she return, *she* was so tired that *she* went right  
to bed too.

Thus, you see, we dwelt in happiness and sweet accord.

Eight months of this bliss, and a serpent glided into our Eden. His name was Jones—John Johnson Jones. He was a golfer and his wife was a ping-ponger—but of her I shall not speak, save to remark that for various reasons Mrs. S., my wife, would not so much as speak to her.

Jones dawned upon my horizon when he competed with me for the Duffer's Cup and almost won it. Next he beat me in a match for the Consolation Prize.—Thenceforth at each bi-weekly tournament fortune threw us together, and we were constantly playing off ties or opposed in final rounds, and so on.

While I will not admit that I hated Jones, I will not deny that I considered him a villain—a mean villain! He was a villain because our club professional declared that he showed the best form of anybody who played over our links; he was a villain because he kept bearing off prizes which I had counted upon capturing myself; he was a villain because he was so blamed popular and easy-going. His wife, moreover, was becoming the champion ping-ponger in the Ibsen Ping-Pong Circle, to which my own wife belonged.

I did not hate Jones; I hated merely the sight of him and the sound of his name.

The crisis came one evening in June, following upon the day of our regular annual Introductory Tournament. All winter long I had been practising in our cottage parlor—the dining-room being given up to ping-pong—with this single tournament in view. I was determined to beat Jones. And now my hopes had been dashed, for Jones had triumphed over me by four holes (owing to luck and technicalities upon which he insisted)!

This was to be a club evening, devoted to a programme of music on the lawn and light refreshments on the veranda. And here let me digress briefly:

Anyone who plays golf, or who is acquainted with somebody who plays golf, knows what an intense person a golfer is. On or off the links, he is incessantly at his game. Day and night, in thought or in reality, he is making his strokes. He roams the house, "swinging," and he cannot walk abroad without beholding a landscape of tees and hazards. His calculating eye is ever alert and his arm is ever busy to "drive off" bric-a-brac and pebbles. Ah, it is fascinating to be a golfer, but it is hard on property and nerves.

So much understood, therefore. When I was sitting this evening in a chair upon the club veranda and saw before me and below me Jones, his bald head waiting like a positive challenge, the impulse was overmastering. He was comfortably placed upon the veranda steps listening to the music, and the top of his head was on a level with my feet. It was such a smooth, rounded, firm, bare surface, furnishing an ideal lie. In the middle was a tiny tuft of hair, supplying the ball!

I tried to turn my attention to the music. The orchestra was playing "The Wearing of the Green," a melody dear to every golfer. But I tried in vain—that enticing pate, with its little clump of hair, obtruded between the notes. My fingers uneasily clasped my cane. I wiggled in my seat. I shut my eyes—no use.

The orchestra struck up "After the Ball," another golfing measure. I opened my eyes; there was the ivory nob, with its spot of black, still beckoning. I trembled, clenched my teeth—and yielded. The opportunity was too fine to be ignored.

# A maiden's wishes



—are but three,  
O'er all the world, whoe'er she be—  
To handsome grow,  
And have a beau,  
And to the bridal altar go—  
All these fruitions of her hope

Come quickly if she'll

## USE PEARS' SOAP



I quietly arose, grasped my cane by the ferrule, took my stance, swung, and in another second the crook would have shaved off that lock of hair without so much as breaking the skin had not a bumptious neighbor seized my arm and violently wrested away my cane. Then I was pinioned in my chair, and amid a ridiculous outcry was accused of having essayed to assault Jones, my rival!

So here I am, on a trumped-up charge, condemned to charlotte-russe, and getting completely out of practice.

I would esteem it a great favor if the person into whose hands this statement falls would find my wife, at the Ibsen Ping-Pong Circle, and make her cognizant of what has become of me, and then drop in at the High-Hole Golf Club and get me a copy of the last handicap list, paying particular notice to the scores of John Johnson Jones.

*Edwin L. Sabin.*

## THE FOURTH

(*La jeunesse n'a qu'un temps.*—MURGER)

*By Edwin L. Sabin*

THE windows burst with candles, rockets,  
And bombs and crackers, small and great;  
While many an urchin's bulging pockets  
Proclaim his zeal to celebrate.  
Oh golden age! Thy name saluting,  
I fain would turn again, in truth,  
The well-thumbed pages constituting  
The dusty almanac of youth.

Behold here feats of early rising,  
An hour before the laggard sun,  
A wrathful neighborhood advising  
Its day of torment had begun;  
The salvos rapid, each a rouser,  
Till high and low had left their beds;  
The flight dismayed of Puss and Towser  
To hide their stunned, affrighted heads.

The cook's shrill protest at a volley  
Delivered through her careless door;  
My swift repentance o'er the folly  
Of smudging so her kitchen floor;  
The mild torpedoes of my sister,  
Provoking lofty jeer and scoff;  
My braggart strutting—and the blister  
I promptly got in "showing off."

DELICIOUS DRINKS and  
DAINTY DISHES are made from

# BAKER'S BREAKFAST C O C O A



**Absolutely  
P U R E**

**Unequalled for Smooth-  
ness, Delicacy & Flavor**

Our Choice Recipe Book  
will tell you how to make  
Fudge, and a great variety  
of dainty dishes, from our  
Cocoa and Chocolate. Sent  
**FREE** to any address 🌿 🌿

**Walter Baker & Co., Limited**  
Established 1780 **DORCHESTER, MASS.**

My clothing sundry times ignited;  
 The glowing punk on which I sat;  
 The package prematurely lighted—  
 The war-dance which ensued thereat!  
 A sudden brilliant, boyish notion,—  
 A pigeon chase! The barn afire,  
 The garden hose, and wild commotion—  
 And then my father's stinging ire.

The sulph'rous shades of eve descending,  
 A final baptism of sparks  
 From pin-wheel and from candle ending  
 This gorgeous carnival of larks.  
 With lard and vaseline anointed  
 Between the sheets I lie at last—  
 To waken stiff, and disappointed  
 That now another Fourth is past.

**The Reason  
 He Didn't  
 Know**

"LIPPINCOTT's out for July?" asked the very vital young lady of  
 the man who stood by the news-stand.

"I dunno," said the man languidly.

"Why don't you know?" demanded the vital young lady sharply.

"Because this ain't my news-stand," said the man in a tired voice.

*Caroline Lockhart.*

**A Prayer**

A LITTLE girl was spending the summer at a fashionable watering-place, and one morning as she played upon the veranda of the hotel where her mother was stopping she heard a lengthy conversation upon the fashions of the day and the absolute necessity of stylishness in dress if one hoped to be a success in society. One lady went so far as to say that stylishness was far more important than beauty.

That night as the child said her usual prayer she added with great earnestness, "And, O dear Lord, do please make me stylish."

*Z. Cocke.*

**"Narrow  
 Twos"**

"LET me see some twos on a narrow last," said the lady as she fluttered into a seat in the shoe-store.

"Did you wish them for yourself, Madam?" inquired the clerk.

"Certainly," she answered in the tense effie-shannon tones that she had so well in command. "Did you," she continued sarcastically, "think that I wanted them for my grandchild?"

Being a person of obvious youth, the clerk could not harbor the suspicion that she was a grandmother.

"No, indeed," he explained, "I merely wondered if they would not pain your feet."



"What? Twos on a narrow last pain my feet? Such impudence!"

"Very well," said the clerk, "I will bring a pair."

And the lady could not get them on.

"There must be some mistake," she declared. "I have always worn twos on a narrow last."

"And have you always possessed these feet?" queried the clerk, mopping the beads of perspiration from his brow.

"Sir-r-r!"

"I beg your pardon, Ma'am, but it seems impossible to reconcile the feet and the shoes, or the shoes and the feet, as the case may be."

"How dare you, sir? I shall report you for this! Bring me a pair of shoes that will be easy on my feet, and be sure that they are twos on a narrow last."

After some search the clerk returned with a pair that slipped on with perfect ease.

"There!" exclaimed the lady. "There! What did I tell you? They fit just as easy and nice!"

"Yes, Ma'am. I thought they would. They are sixes."

"Great Heaven! Are you crazy? Why, these shoes make my feet feel as if they were in steamboats! Take them off at once. I shall see your employer and have you discharged."

Here the clerk removed the shoes and retired for a few moments. On his return there was a look of stern, desperate resolve on his face.

"I find," he murmured, "that I was in error. The shoes are twos on a narrow last. I was looking at the number upside down."

"They are just the shoes I want," beamed the lady. "Wrap them up."

After the lady left, the clerk moaned as one in great anguish.

"Backslid!" he groaned. "Backslid! There's no use in a man trying to hold a job like this and joining church too."

At this moment the lady returned. Hurrying to the clerk, she fairly threw the shoes at him, shrieking:

"You looked at the number upside down, did you? Then you mean to insinuate that I wear a number nine? You wretch!"

Two minutes later a discouraged believer was seeking a new position—one in which there would be no call made upon his imagination.

*W. D. Nesbit.*

## WHEN THE BAND PLAYS ON THE BEACH

*By John Mervin Hull*

THERE is magic in the music when the band plays on the beach,  
Echoes from the deep sea-caverns where the sounding waters reach,  
Rhythmic, whirling, tripping dances, which the swirling wavelets teach.

Twenty thousand forms dejected, moping, sleeping through the day,  
In a flash are resurrected when the band begins to play;  
All the crowd is in commotion, loungers leave their beds of sand,  
Myriad feet with measured motion moving to the music-stand.  
Barefoot children shout with laughter as the stony path they climb,

# Mellin's Food



GUY S. COTHRAN, JR.

ROME, GEORGIA

"My baby boy, Guy S., Jr., is now two years old and has never tasted anything but Mellin's Food since he was one week old. He was very delicate at the start, but he commenced to improve from the very first, and we give Mellin's Food the credit for his present condition."

*Send for a free sample of Mellin's Food*

MELLIN'S FOOD COMPANY

BOSTON, MASS.

Portly parents follow after, wheezing hard in perfect time.  
 All the little folks are dancing, joy transforms each happy face,  
 Backward now, and now advancing, posing with unstudied grace;  
 Cheering crowds with bliss ecstatic munch, unheeding cultured scorn,  
 Quarts of peanuts aromatic, pecks of juicy, fresh pop-corn.  
 Sombre cynics, who were napping when the band began to play,  
 Find their frisky feet a-tapping in a long-forgotten way;  
 Men with temper like a thistle from some after-dinner pain  
 Set their sullen lips to whistle as they catch the lilting strain;  
 Weary faces lose their wrinkles, crying babies laugh and leap,  
 Till the far-off music tinkles in the rainbow caves of sleep.  
 Waves of melody entrancing, floating outward to the sea,  
 Meet the ocean waves advancing, and in harmony agree,  
 Till the bathers feel the swaying of the rhythmic waters there,  
 And, the impulse glad obeying, float forgetful of all care.  
 Neptune dances in the hollow of a crystal valley low  
 With the mermaids fair that follow where the coral gardens grow;  
 And the world itself is swinging where the starry spaces reach  
 To the magic music ringing when the band plays on the beach.



**Outside of  
Eden—  
A Protest**

OF course it's irregular. What do the readers of LIPPINCOTT care for the row kicked up by a born "knocker"?

When Dr. Charles C. Abbott wrote that elegant article about "Eden, Past and Present," in the May number of LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE he had no thought of the fellow who has no meadow hickory under which to rest.

Can it be true that Dr. Abbott does not know that more than sixty out of every hundred of our people have no time to search for Edenic scenes, nor to enjoy them if such scenes were all about them?

How charmingly the good Doctor writes about a well-remembered August day, "when the world seemed bathed in molten brass," etc., and how he found "a cool, sweet spot where the shaded brook laughed as it hurried towards the outside world," and there he tarried and was happy!

My dear Doctor, suppose you were a salesman or a saleswoman in a store either in city or country, or suppose you were a laborer in any of the great enterprises demanded by our new civilization,—a day laborer, like a builder, a machinist, an engineer, a farmer, or engaged in still lower forms of battling for bread,—how would you reach that Eden?

Such people are barred from your Eden by more than flaming swords: unremitting toil—toil without ceasing—shuts and locks the gates to anything Edenic.

True, the picture is well drawn, is artistic, and it represents a truth that applies to such lives as that of the writer (Dr. Abbott). But what of the millions of toilers? Our theory of government is such that it is best they be taught to read. LIPPINCOTT is a popular publication, and when such beautiful things are shown to be possible, may not the very picture make the toiler's burden harder to bear?





Special care is needed to keep hair sweet and clean in hot weather. A healthy scalp is essential to soft, bright hair.

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makes a perfect shampoo. Cleanses delightfully, removes dandruff or excess oil, gives the hair the proper lustre.

25 cents at all dealers.

**Special Offer** Our booklet and trial size package of Soap and Facial Cream sent for 5 cents to pay postage; or for 10 cents the same and samples of Woodbury's Facial Powder and Dental Cream.

**THE ANDREW JERGENS CO.,** Sole Agents, Dept. V, Cincinnati, O.



I believe that this new world is full of Edenic possibilities for every intelligent being, but I know that under present conditions, when each is working for himself, when one is seeking to enjoy the highest and best possibilities of life, no matter if another lives in poverty and penury,—I know that much the larger part of humanity must live Outside of Eden.

Should the time ever come when the command, "Bear ye one another's burdens," and that still greater law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," become a part of the every-day lives of all men, and when the law of selfishness and greed and oppression is relegated to the barbaric ages—then, and not till then, may we all join the good Doctor in listening to the bird-songs, the rippling brooks, and the murmuring breezes, in admiring the blue skies, the foliage of trees, and the tintings of the hills in the distance, and in feeling and knowing that for him whose life is full of peace and joy the whole world is Eden.

*H. Hershberger.*

### SUPPLY AND DEMAND

*By Sam S. Stinson*

A RICH man sat him down one night to dine;  
Rare was his food, superb his priceless wine.  
A poor man, hungry, lurked without the gate,  
And craved a crumb from off the rich man's plate.  
Yet neither rich nor poor man ate that night:  
One had no food, one had no appetite.

**Why He  
Smiled**

THE piano drummer from Wilkes-Barre came into the smoking-car smiling broadly.

"What is it, old man?" asked the white-goods man from Fall River. "Had an addition to your family or got your salary raised?"

"Nope," said the piano drummer, affecting indifference, "nothing special; only Plymouth has been quarantined on account of small-pox."

"Anything humorous in that?" inquired the white-goods man.

"My mother-in-law lives there," replied the piano drummer as he took a flask out of his grip and "treated."

*Caroline Lockhart.*

**Utilize the  
Dog**

Down in Georgia, according to my friend, Captain Lyerly, who ought to know, lives a man who is noted for his love of ease, but whose wife is sufficiently a hustler to almost make up for his chronic disinclination to activity.

One cold night he went to bed, leaving some bags of grain out-of-doors which should have been placed in the barn for protection against the weather, to say nothing of thieves. But then, they don't have many thieves in Georgia.

During the night the hero of this story awoke and thought that he heard something which sounded like rain. He was anxious to know whether it was raining or not, for if it were, he wanted an opportunity to worry about that

# Poor Beer vs. Pure Beer

Both cost you alike, yet one costs the maker twice as much as the other. One is good, and good for you; the other is harmful. Let us tell you where the difference lies.

## POOR BEER

is easy to brew.

The materials are cheap. The brewing may be done under any sort of surroundings.

Cleanliness is not important, for the users never see it brewed.

Any water will do. No air is too impure for the cooling.

No filtering, no sterilizing; almost no ageing, for ageing ties up money.

What is the use of expense and care when there is no reputation to defend?—

When few people who drink it know even the name of the maker.

## PURE BEER

calls for the best materials—the best that money can buy.

The brewery must be as clean as your kitchen; the utensils as clean.

The cooling must be done in filtered air, in a plate glass room.

The product must be aged for months, until thoroughly fermented, else it causes biliousness.

The beer must be filtered, then sterilized in the bottle.

You're always welcome to that brewery for the owners are proud of it.

And the size of it proves the eventual success of worth.

Schlitz is a pure beer, famous for fifty years.

To maintain its standard, we double the necessary cost of our brewing. Don't you prefer a pure beer, a good beer, a healthful beer, when it costs no more than the common?

Ask for the brewery bottling.



*The Beer That Made Milwaukee Famous*

grain, or perhaps hint to his wife and then go to sleep while she slipped out and attended to it.

He thought the matter over for some time and then hunched the good woman.

"Nancy!"

"What is it, John?"

"Is it rainin'?"

"I don't know, John."

"I wisht I knew."

"Why don't you get up and see, then?"

"I hate to; I'm just awful sleepy."

"Well, then, go to sleep and never mind."

"W-all, I'd like to know. Hit's right important."

"Then go and see."

"You go, won't you, Nancy?"

"No, I won't—so now, you lazy thing, you!"

John lay and reflected for some minutes, then awoke his wife again and said: "I'll tell ye what ye might do, Nancy. Ye might git up an' let the dorg out. He'll bark fer a minit er two an' then whine ter git back in. Ye c'n let 'im in an' then feel o' him, an' if hit's a-rainin' he'll be wet, an if hit ain't he won't be, an' then hit'll be all right."

*Henry M. Wiltse.*

**A  
Providential  
Porter**

A GENTLEMAN, Scotch Presbyterian, travelling with his five-year-old son, told the child as he put him to bed to say his prayers as usual, which the boy flatly refused to do.

"Don't you want the Lord to take care of you to-night?" asked the anxious father.

"What's the porter here for?" was the child's response.

*C. B. Kuehn.*

**The Retort  
Courteous**

I HAD swung the shanty-boat Easy Way (a houseboat in her Northern home) into the canal at Vicksburg, and moored her alongside a neat white craft of similar size, on the sides of which appeared the name "Snow Ball, of Paducah." Then I went up-town to the post-office, and Madge began house-cleaning, with open doors and windows.

In about five minutes the door of the Snow Ball opened and out came a neatly dressed, rather nice-looking young woman. She surveyed the Easy Way a moment and then stepped over on our deck and looked in at the cabin door.

"Mohnin'," she said languidly. Madge gasped in amazement. Though we were democratic on the river, an uninvited intrusion into a shanty-boat cabin we had not before heard of.

"Good-morning," said Madge at last when she had recovered her breath. The stranger took this as an invitation and stepped within. She paused to survey the little interior before taking a seat, and as she did so Madge noticed



**FOR  
THE HOME**



**HAND  
SAPOLIO  
FOR  
TOILET & BATH**



**FOR  
THE FACTORY**

that though her dress was spotless, her face rosy and clean, and her appearance neat, she was certainly chewing tobacco. Madge's lower jaw dropped. She stared in astonishment.

River life may have kept the stranger from some of the developing experiences women in better society meet with, but it had not dwarfed her perceptions.

"Oh," she said in a compassionate tone, "y'all don't chew tobacco,—does yuh?"

"No," said Madge, "I don't."

The stranger chewed and reflected. It was evident at a glance that we were Northerners.

"Why, up No'th," she said lazily and reflectively, "up No'th" (with indescribable emphasis) "all the *ladies* chews tobacco."

And having thus vindicated herself, she retired to the immaculate deck of the Snow Ball.

*John Swain.*

### THE REMEDY

*By Eleanor W. F. Bates*

If missionaries still are burned

By savage, untamed tribes afar,

The remedy is quickly learned:

Discharge the cook—and there you are!

**Turnips and  
Beats**

MRS. SMITH was not in favor of adorning education with any frills and ruffles. She opposed the introduction of each of the so-called "fads," and her opposition was always loud and insistent. One morning she visited the principal of the school building which sheltered the little Smiths for the five most peaceful hours of their day and expressed her sentiments in no measured terms.

"It's disgraceful the way children are taught!" she began, with a painful disregard of tact and diplomacy. "Their studies are so jumbled together that they don't know when they have finished with arithmetic and taken up geography. The other day Bessie—she is in G room, you know—came home and said that the teacher had stopped in the middle of a singing-lesson, right in the middle of a song, to ask how many turnips were in a peck."

"You must be mistaken," excused the astonished principal.

"No, ma'am. Bessie told me, and Bessie never lies," said Bessie's mother with a complacency that irritated the atmosphere.

The teacher was sent for. She denied that she had interrupted a music lesson to satisfy her curiosity in regard to turnips and pecks. She went back to G room with unkindly feelings, but three minutes later she came back smiling.

"I know now what she meant," said she. "I asked the children how many beats were in a measure."

*Frances R. Sterrett.*

# Could any offer be fairer?

We will send you **FOUR FULL QUARTS** of **HAYNER'S SEVEN-YEAR-OLD RYE** for **\$3.20**, and we will pay the express charges. Try it and if you don't find it all right and as good as you can buy from anybody else for double the money, send it back at our expense and your \$3.20 will be promptly refunded. Bear in mind that this offer is backed by a company with a capital of \$500,000.00, paid in full, and the proud reputation of 36 years of continuous success. We are regularly supplying over a quarter of a million satisfied customers, convincing evidence that our whiskey pleases and that we do just as we say. Won't you let us send you a trial order? You run no risk in accepting this offer for your money will be refunded at once if you are not perfectly satisfied. Shipment made in a plain sealed case, no marks or brands of any kind to indicate contents.

Orders for Ariz., Cal., Col., Idaho, Mont., Nev., N. Mex., Ore., Utah, Wash., or Wyo., must be on the basis of 4 quarts for \$4.00 by **EXPRESS PREPAID** or 20 Quarts for \$16.00 by **FREIGHT PREPAID**.

## Direct from our distillery to YOU

**Saves dealers' profits,  
Prevents adulteration.**

# HAYNER WHISKEY

**PURE SEVEN YEAR OLD RYE.**

# 4 FULL QUARTS \$3.20

**EXPRESS CHARGES PAID BY US.**

We make at our own distillery every gallon of whiskey we sell, and our entire product is sold direct to consumers, thus insuring absolutely pure whiskey and saving you the big profits of the dealers. Don't for a moment imagine that **HAYNER WHISKEY** is "poor stuff" and used only by people who can't afford to buy higher priced goods. On the contrary, we have had for years the patronage of thousands of the wealthiest and most prominent business and professional men in every section of this country,—the very people who can afford the best and wouldn't be satisfied with anything but the best. Do you think we could hold their trade if our whiskey wasn't all right? **HAYNER WHISKEY** has no superior at any price and is used alike by millionaires and men of moderate incomes, simply because it gives perfect satisfaction and they will not throw away their money by paying a dealer two or three times as much for whiskey certainly no better than **HAYNER**, if as good. Won't you let us save **YOU** money? Write our nearest office and do it **NOW**.

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TROY, O.**



**An Unwilling  
Juror**

A NEW HAMPSHIRE judge has in his possession the following letter sent to him by an old farmer who had been notified that he had been drawn as a juror for a certain term of court:

"DEER JUDGE: I got your letter tellin' me to come to manchesster an' do dooty on the joory an i rite you these fue lines to let you know that you'll have to git some one else for it ain't so that I kin leave home now. I got to do some butcherin' an' sort over a lot of apples just about the time the joory will be settin' in your Court. Si Jackman of this town says that he would as soon as not go, fer he ain't nothin' else to do jess now, so you better send fer him. I hate the worst way not to oblidge you, but it ain't so I kin at pressent. Ennyhow I ain't much on the law, never havin' been a jooryman ceptin when old Bud Stiles got killed by the cars here some years ago when I was one that set on the boddy with the koroner. So you better send fer Si Jackman, for he has got some kin in manchesster he wants to vissit anyhow, an' he'd be willin' to go fer his car fare there an back. Ancer back if you want Si."

**A Rebel Ram**

THE Missouri Colonel, as usual, was entertaining a group of his friends. From stage-driving and cow-punching the talk had drifted to billy-goats. Lighting a fresh cigar, the Colonel said:

"Bob and I—Bob was my cousin—used to have a picnic with an old ram. Both of us carried marks and bruises that were the result of unavoidable contact with the butting end of the ram, and we never let slip a chance to get even with him. Down in one end of the meadow where the sheep grazed was a deep pond cut into a bend of the creek. The pond was made deep in the beginning, and the water, rushing around the bend when the creek was high, had hollowed it out still more. It was about twelve feet deep. Well, Bob and I would watch until the sheep grazed to the top of the hill, which was about five hundred yards from the bank of the pond, then we would take turn about playing the trick.

"One of us would get on all fours on the bank and wave a red bandanna handkerchief until it caught the eye of the ram. Nothing made him hotter than seeing a red flag flaunted before him. He would have charged into a stone wall had there been a red rag on it. The moment the ram saw the handkerchief he would straighten up and brace himself for a good start. Down the hill he would come, like a runaway locomotive, straight for the object in possession of the red handkerchief. The one playing the trick would watch until the ram cleared the ground ready to land, then suddenly duck flat to the ground. The ram, of course, would go over into the deep pond with a momentum that would send him almost to the bottom. While he was snorting and blowing getting out we would run away.

"One day my father caught us ducking the old ram, and I thought I would never be able to effect a sitting posture again as long as I lived. My, I can feel that yet! Not long after that the 'old man,' as we called him, had a little experience with the ram which caused him to alter his mind about 'cruelty to animals.' Bob and I were on an opposite hill in the pasture, trying to separate a rabbit from a hole in a tree, when we noticed the old man crossing the

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*The TRAVELERS*, the largest and strongest Accident Insurance Company in the world, insures against injury at a rate in accordance with the peril of the occupation of the insured. No man is asked to pay more than his own class calls for. That there is always **risk** is shown by the fact that *The TRAVELERS* alone

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In settlement of 14,540 accident claims.

NOTE.—The more dependent you are upon your weekly income, the more important the weekly indemnity in case of accident. **An Agent in Every Town**

A MOTHER'S MILK may not fit the requirements of her own offspring. A failing milk is usually a poor milk. Borden's Eagle Brand Condensed Milk has been the standard for more than forty years. Send ten cents for "Baby's Diary," 71 Hudson Street, New York.

**BEST WAY TO BANISH FLIES.**—Long known as a pest and nuisance, the common housefly is now recognized as a disseminator of contagious diseases. Flies carry with them the filth and disease germs which attract these insects, and deposit their unsavory and dangerous burden on our persons, clothing, and food. Flies must be checked in this work of destruction. Various modes of banishing flies have been tried. Poison only causes them to fall from everywhere on to everything. Fly-traps do not confine the disease germs, which are the more rapidly spread by the buzzing wings of the prisoner. The only effective and sanitary way of disposing of the fly and his bad load is by the use of Tanglefoot sticky fly-paper. This catches the fly and coats it and the disease germs it carries with a varnish from which escape is impossible. The very low cost of this article and its extreme effectiveness recommend it as a popular and economical safeguard against the dangers and annoyance caused by flies.



meadow. We were supposed to be cutting sprouts on another part of the farm, consequently we kept very still. The old man was the proud possessor of a goatee, and when he was in deep thought he had a fashion of fingering it gently.

"He stopped in front of the pond and began caressing the goatee. I knew in a moment that something was doing. Presently he laid down the axe he was carrying and, drawing out his bandanna, dropped to his knees and began waving at the ram. In a few seconds the signal was observed, and the ram said 'Ba-a-a-a!' which was his defiance to such daring insolence.

"Our eyes almost bulged from our heads when we saw the ram going down the hill at terrific speed straight for the old man, who, to the best of his abilities, was playing the role just as he had seen us do it. The ram left the earth for the leap when he was about twenty feet from the objective point. At that moment the old man ducked to the earth to allow the ram a clear passage into the pond and stuck a weed in his nose. Forgetting the impending trouble, he raised up again. Instantly there was a dull thud as the ram squarely struck his rear dimensions. They both went into the pond together.

"Floundering and spurting water, both made for the bank. The old man got out first and seized the axe, but, good luck to the ram, he managed to make his exit on the opposite side of the pond and escaped.

In the next bunch of sheep driven to market the old ram was present."

*R'croft.*



#### The Cardinal's Soup

A PROMINENT Roman Catholic clergyman well known to the writer recently visited the Eternal City, and while stopping at the American College there was invited to dine at the house of one of the Roman Cardinals, whose name for many reasons is not given, but who is known among the dignitaries of the church in Rome for his parsimony and the poverty of his menu.

His position is such, however, that an invitation to dinner is equal to a command, and it is a common saying among the priests, "I'll have a good appetite for breakfast to-morrow; I dine to-night with Cardinal R——."

Among the guests at the Cardinal's table on the evening alluded to was a little old man from the Jesuits' College. He was a jolly fellow, in a quiet way, but his humor was always tinged with satire. He is a metaphysician, and when asked for an opinion on any proposition he almost invariably prefaces his reply with the proviso of the old scholastics—"I distinguish."

At dinner the conversation turned into a serio-comic discussion on the validity of a baptism administered with soup instead of water. The host, thinking to start the disquisitive Jesuit on an amusing dissertation, said to him, giving, meanwhile, a dignified wink to the rest of the guests, "How say you to that proposition, Father C——? Is it lawful to baptize in soup?"

"I distinguish, your Eminence," replied the old man, and those near him saw the twinkle of a smile behind his glasses, "I distinguish: To baptize in ordinary soup would be, I think, contrary to the canon; but to baptize in your Eminence's soup would be entirely lawful."

*J. H. R.*

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Dr. R. Belner, M. D., a prominent physician in Jersey City, N. J., says:

"I recently prescribed Pabst Extract for three of my patients, all of whom were ladies, and all of whom were suffering from dyspepsia and its consequences, and in all these cases it acted like a charm. Two of them bought more of the tonic, and continued to take it, until now they tell me they can eat anything, and, one of them added, 'everything,' without the slightest inconvenience. They have certainly improved wonderfully in weight and strength. I have prescribed your 'Best' Tonic a great number of times. It is one of the best, if not the very best."

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## THE MAID AND THE MISTLETOE

*By Clinton Scollard*

'Twas near the merry tide of Yule,  
The air was crispy-clear and cool;  
Upon the rill and roadside pool  
The ice was glassy;  
When down the upland way there tripped,—  
Eyes brown, and holly-berry lipped,  
Ear sea-shell shaped and rosy-tipped,—  
A winsome lassie.

About her throat was clasped a ruff  
Fashioned of some soft, fluffy stuff;  
Her hands were hidden in her muff,  
Wherefrom was peeping  
A little spray, the gloss and glow  
Upon whose leaves I seemed to know;  
It was a bit of mistletoe  
She had in keeping.

I smiled, and thrilled at heart to trace  
The faint reflection on her face;  
I bowed with what I might of grace;  
She too bowed slightly;  
My eyes said, "May I speak to you?"  
I fancied hers replied, "Yes, do!"  
At least I took their look for cue;  
She answered brightly.

And so we fell into a chat,  
A shred of this, a scrap of that;  
Whate'er she ventured was so "pat,"  
Her talk quite won me;  
And when we parted lingeringly  
(Alas, that such sad things must be!)  
A sprig of mistletoe did she  
Bestow upon me.

Ofttimes thereafter did I cope  
With that long summit-leading slope,  
Lured onward by the beacon, Hope,  
Yet ever missed her;

Haply it seems a little thing,  
 And yet at Yule these words will ring  
 Sharp in my ears, and leave their sting,—  
*"You never kissed her!"*



**A Bull-  
and-Cock Tale**

A GOOD old lady who was in happy ignorance of the fact that there is a cocktail called the Martini went into an office where subscriptions were being taken for the relief of the sufferers from the second disaster at Martinique.

She took with some difficulty a dollar bill out of her purse and laid it, smiling, upon the desk.

"Send that, please," she said, "to the Martini sufferers."

*Louis Weadock.*



**Billy Cole's  
Refrigerator**

THE Tourist turned his steps towards the cemetery. Idle curiosity led him to the humbler part of the grounds, where sand was flying by shovelfuls from a partially dug grave.

"This here hole," announced Briggs, the grave-digger, smiling hospitably as he leaned on his shovel to rest, "is for poor old Billy Cole. He's lived right here in the cemetery for twenty-seven years. He wuz a character, Billy wuz; but he wa'n't of much use in any other capacity of late years. We're goin' to miss him, though, around here."

Briggs, who was, without suspecting it, himself something of a character, shovelled with renewed energy to conceal his emotion.

"Yes," he continued, "Billy worked fer Simon Beals, the banker. Old Simon Beals wuz jest daft about raisin' flowers, and he used to think nobody could grow things like Billy. I guess he wuz jest about right too. When Simon died, Widow Beals moved back East, where she come from, promisin' to pay Billy a hundred dollars a year fer takin' care of her lot. You can see it over there—the biggest an' the finest in the hull cemetery.

"Poor Billy wuz ez black ez the ace o' clubs, an' he hed a squint in one eye that sort o' spiled any good looks he might otherwise hev hed. The white folks livin' near the place wouldn't give him houseroom. His own shanty wuz too far away, so, at first, he sets up a little "A" tent in a field jest back o' the cemetery, an' slep' on the ground, rolled up in a blanket. He wuz, ez I said before, a rattlin' good gardener, an' he hed a number o' lots besides the Bealses' to look after, so that gave him enough to live on, and he spent all his time in the cemetery.

"But ez he got older he grew stiff in his j'int's with rheumatiz, so he asked fer permission to sleep in the tool-house jest opposite the Bealses' vault. He hadn't no fear o' ghosts, fer he said that so long ez his old master's spook wuz a-prowlin' around with the rest he wuz willin' to take his chances. He set up a bed in the tool-house; but there wuzn't no room fer nothin' else, so he put his little cook-stove up jest outside the door. There wuz a lot of little Christmas-trees a-growin' at both sides o' the shanty; so betwixt the vault in

As Pears' Soap dissolves  
Beauty evolves



**Pears' Soap**

Matchless for the Complexion

front, the hill behind, an' the trees to both sides, nobody's notice the place. Very few knew he wuz livin' there.

"After a while, though, he got hisself into trouble. You see, 'twuz this way: There wuz no room fer a cupboard in the tool-house, so he kep' his provisions just across the way in the receivin'-vault. Now, to tell the truth, a receivin'-vault ain't exactly a necessity in a town ez small ez this; but them Bealses had ev'rything there wuz goin' themselves, an' they had to spend their surplus money on *some*thin'. Some folks run by nature to steam yachts an' automobiles, but the Bealses wuz great on cemetery fixin's! Old Simon built the receivin'-vault an' presented it to the cemetery, reservin' a permanent place in it fer himself an' his wife—they never had no children. When the old gentleman died, he wuz laid in there on the floor ag'in' the wall, accordin' to instructions, leavin' a place beside him fer Mis' Beals. Then the casket wuz walled up with marble slabs, an' jest above the top they built a stone shelf fer the general public, one at a time.

"Bein' underground, the vault wuz always cool, an' old Billy kept his provisions in there right on top o' Mr. Beals. Of course, it looked queer enough to see plates o' butter, dishes o' cold cabbage, and slices o' bacon a-settin' there on that marble slab, like offerin's to a heathen goddess, but the townsfolk soon got used to it. Strangers laughed, but never done no kickin'—'twuzn't none o' *their* funeral.

"But one day there *wuz* a row about it. You see, there wuz jest room enough on the shelf fer one casket at a time, an' when Julius Rogers died there wuz some hitch about gettin' the lot they wanted, so they 'lowed to keep him in the vault fer several days. Julius wuz the tallest man in town, an' his coffin filled that shelf lengthwise from end to end. It wuz August, an' the weather wuz pretty warm. Ol' Billy had jest laid in his week's supply o' provisions, an' he hated like thunder to move out to accommodate the corpse, but he done it with a pretty good grace.

"But, ez I said, it wuz pretty hot. Billy hated to waste all them good provisions, an' when night come he couldn't stand it no longer. He set his butter an' a pound o' pork sausages in there, right on top o' the coffin among the flowers, intendin', of course, to take 'em out again first thing in the mornin'. But ez luck would have it, the widow had a garden jest chuck full o' sweet peas. She riz at daybreak, picked a basketful, an' drove to the cemetery with 'em before common folks wuz stirrin'.

"When she saw them sausages she wuz red-headed. Ol' Billy would 'a' be'n turned out o' the cemetery then an' there if it hadn't 'a' be'n fer ol' Mis' Beals, who happened to be in town fer a visit. Mis' Beals wuz a lively ol' lady, her tongue wuz pretty sharp, an' she owned a good bit o' property, so the Park Commissioners wuzn't willin' to go ag'in' her. She said that Billy wuz to hev charge of her lot, sausages er no sausages, jest ez long ez he could crawl; an' she guessed if Billy an' Mr. Beals didn't object to the butter, nobody else had any call to. If Mr. Beals had any objections, there wuz no way of findin' it out, so Billy stayed.

"However, the scandalized town thought it best, after that, to buy him a zinc-lined refrigerator. 'Twuz a fine, big one, painted bright yellow, an' that there ice-box wuz the gaudiest thing in the hull cemetery, a-settin' there

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ag'in' the side o' the tool-house; it fairly made the geraniums, at two dollars a dozen, look pale; an' Mis' Beals left orders fer the ice-man to keep Billy supplied with ice, free of expense; but even so, Billy maintained to his dyin' day that that there store refrigerator wuzn't no patch on the vault fer coolness."

*Carroll Watson Rankin.*

**A Suggestive  
Xmas Gift**

MR. T—— has in his employ a score or more of very able workmen whose one failing is that they persist in celebrating all holidays by a too frequent use of the cup which inebriates but does not cheer.

As he is a strictly temperate man, this custom annoyed Mr. T—— very much. One Christmas, when he gave them their usual present in money, he earnestly begged them not to squander it on liquor, but to use it sensibly and in a way to give their families pleasure instead of distress.

"I can't see why you must become intoxicated every Christmas," he said. "I enjoy the holidays immensely, spend them with my family, but none of you ever knew me to be unable to be at work the next day because of too much whiskey, did you?"

"No, sir," said the oldest workman (and worst offender), "and we're much obliged to you for your Christmas gift, sir, and for your good advice, sir, and we hope you'll accept a little present we've got for you, sir, hoping it'll give you a merry Christmas, sir."

The speech was the usual one, and always preceded the usual gift, a box of cigars. This time the spokesman handed to Mr. T—— a quart bottle of whiskey!

*Frances Ellen Wadleigh.*

## WHEN SHE FELT OF HER BELT AT THE BACK

*By C. A. M.*

I saw her go shopping in stylish attire,

As she felt of her belt at the back;

Her walk was as jaunty as springy steel wire,

And many a rubberneck turned to admire,

As she felt of her belt at the back.

She wondered if all the accoutrements there

Were fastened just right, or were out of repair,

And she felt of her belt at the back.

I saw her at church as she entered the pew,

And she felt of her belt at the back;

She had on a skirt that was rusty and new,

And she didn't quite know what the fast'nings might do,

So she felt of her belt at the back.

She fidgeted much while the first prayer was said,

She fumbled around while the last hymn was read,

Then felt of her belt at the back.

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Jack told her one night that he loved her like mad,  
 And she felt of her belt at the back;  
 She didn't look sorry, she didn't look glad,  
 She looked as if thinking, "Well, that isn't bad,"  
 And she felt for her belt at the back.  
 But—well, I believe 'twas no very great harm,  
 For what should the maiden expect but an arm  
 When she felt for her belt at the back?

**The Ingenious Young Man's Gift** "My young friend Dawkins," remarked Judge Crabtree thoughtfully, "is in trouble once more."  
 "What's the matter now—been trying to shave himself again?" inquired Major Dodge.

"No, it's something far more serious than that. My interesting young friend would rather have cut his throat while shaving than to have had his present trouble. He's an extremely ingenious young man. He was a shade too ingenious this time. He is also ever an impecunious youth. If Dawkins should find a five-dollar bill in his pocket, he would go around and demand police protection with the idea that somebody was trying to get him into trouble by playing the game that Joseph did with his brothers. Of course, the young man has got himself engaged to be married, and naturally he selected his employer's daughter. She and her family are very far from being impecunious, so the boy has had to keep up a bold front.

"The approach of Christmas worried Dawkins a good deal. He wanted to do the handsome thing by the girl and determined to make the effort of his life. There seemed to be no way but to save up. This was hard, painful, and unnatural, but he persisted, and the day before Christmas found that he had accumulated three dollars and forty-five cents. He had his heart set on a cut-glass cologne-bottle. He didn't know much about the cost of cut-glass cologne-bottles, but nevertheless he went around to the cut-glass cologne-bottle store with a jaunty air. He selected one which struck his fancy and asked the price. The salesperson replied that it was fifteen dollars. My young friend never moved a muscle, but said he would look at some better ones. As the clerk started to stand it back on the shelf it slipped from his hand and broke into about a hundred pieces on the marble floor. An inspiration filled the soul of the young man. He inquired what it was worth now. The other said he could have it for fifty cents. He paid the money, gave the young lady's address, and walked out, feeling better than he had since the day he found the dollar bill in his winter overcoat pocket.

"That evening he called on the girl, having first practised a look of extreme woe before the mirror for use when she should announce that his beautiful present had arrived broken. But it had not yet been delivered when he got there; however, it was soon after, and as the young lady opened the box, her father and mother standing by, he gradually began to get his muscles of extreme woe into commission. The next moment he needed them too, and those of surprise, consternation, and a few other things."

# BLIND MAN'S BUFF



**Open your  
eyes**

Some people buy mattresses blindfolded. They buy a *hair* mattress because it has always seemed "the thing to do," or they buy an *imitation felt* which the slick dealer says is "just as good" as the famous

## Ostermoor Patent Elastic Felt Mattress, \$15.

A *hair* mattress is made from the hair of dead horses. An *imitation felt* is a tick which has been *stuffed* with ordinary cotton batting or cotton waste—it lumps and mats—uncomfortable in a month—useless in a year.

The hand-laid (*not stuffed*) filling of Ostermoor Patent Elastic Felt remains intact, sweet, pure and clean. Needs nothing but an occasional sun bath to keep in perfect order for an ordinary lifetime; no care, no trouble, no annoyance, and no expense for remaking so necessary with hair. The top-notch of economy and comfort combined.

**OUR HANDSOME BOOK FREE** Send your name on a postal for our free 96-page book "The Test of Time," whether you want a mattress or not.

It gives strong endorsements from men and women of national reputation. It treats of the patented process of the manufacture of Ostermoor Patent Elastic Felt, and illustrates the various other household uses to which the Patent



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3 ft. wide, 30 lbs., 10.00  
3 ft. 6 in. wide, 35 lbs., 11.70  
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All 6 ft. 3 inches long.

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**EXPRESS PREPAID**

Elastic Felt is put—pillows, window-seat and church cushions, etc. It gives our guarantee that your money will be refunded, if, after **30 nights' free trial**, it is not all you expected or even hoped for. Is that fair?

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trading on the name of "felt." It's not **felt** if it's not an **Ostermoor**. Our name and guarantee on every genuine mattress. Send for free book to-day.

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"Hadn't the store people sent what he ordered?"

"Oh, yes; precisely what he ordered. The pieces were all there. And each piece was carefully wrapped in a bit of soft, white tissue-paper. My ingenious young friend hadn't felt so downcast since the day he found he had lost the pawn-ticket for his suit of evening clothes."

*Hayden Carruth.*

## TO BANBURY CROSS

*By Thomas Walsh*

"A HORSE, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!"

And off where Banbury's young woman springs

With tinkling hosiery and finger-rings

Upon her snow-white hobby round the course!

Fling Shakespeare down, and as for problems Norse—

To grandma leave the Ibsen-Bjornson things;

A pair of ankles are as good as wings

Dramatic or poetic tour de force.

There shall be music too where'er she goes;

Not such as Wagner's sexual scores beget,

But wabbling of the strings and piccolos

In rhythms that gladden ballet and soubrette;

Till worries, duties, arts, and such are set

As naught beside the magic beat of toes.

**A Mute  
Appeal**

"MAMMA," asked Young Curiosity, "when deaf and dumb people cheer, do their fingers get tired?"

*Louis Weadock.*

**School-room  
Humors**

THE humors, conscious and unconscious, of an examination are most enjoyed by those who correct the hundreds of papers which result. One such examiner in an Eastern State has preserved in a note-book the amusing blunders made by children ranging in age from twelve to sixteen years. All of these were seriously set down in the course of examinations in English literature. They tended to relieve the monotony of correcting, day after day, papers on the same set of questions.

The bits of wisdom that follow were from many sources. It is hard to believe some of them unintentional. "Shylock didn't want Lorenzo to marry Jessica because he wasn't a Catholic." Emerson "died as innocent as a new-born child. His principle attributes to our Literature are a great many essays which might be read backwards or in any other manner and you could not find the least reference to the subject." "In Emerson's style we find a chrysal transparency and exquisite sense of beauty, which render his work dangerous."

This in answer to a question about an English dynasty: "The Plantagenets were a sort of play in which different Muses were represented." A com-



## A Holiday Gift FREE

The Fairy Plate Calendar for 1903 is one of the choicest gifts which could be offered for the holidays. It is indeed, the most unique and artistic calendar of the year. There are four different plates, each lithographic reproductions as above of Royal Vienna China in 12 colors and gold, with the center counter sunk and the borders embossed, and all this beauty emphasized with magnificent heads by Ryland, the English portrait painter. Each 9½ inches in diameter. We will send calendar free to any one who will forward full name and address with ten Oval Fairy Box Fronts or ten two-cent stamps.

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ment upon Anne Bradstreet's "The tenth muse lately sprung up in America" was, "Anne Bradstreet wrote about the 'Tenth Muse.'"

It is difficult to believe this unconscious: "Thoreau was of very moderate circumstances but his mind was still more so." This boy had been reading some grandiloquent writer: "Longfellow was not a Milton, nor a Shakespeare; nor was he grand like Bryant; or melancholy like Poe; he new every stop in the great organ and touched all its keys at once. His kind sympathies have dried the tears of millions."

In these scientific days Franklin's "Autobiography" is often given as "Autobiograph." Burns's poem is thus summarized, "Mr. Cotter comes home on Saturday night." Chaucer's priest "received his check on 1st of every month."

"Whittier's style is clear and simple. He wrote short feet, using few meters to the foot." One boy had read somewhere that a volume of Burns's poems fell into Whittier's hands when a lad and gave him an irresistible impulse towards verse making. The pupil's deduction from this authentic incident was, "Burns and Whittier became great chums in later life."

The esoteric meaning of Sir Launfal's Vision to one student was: "Do not spend your life in a business having no particular redeeming feature, in other words, do not go in search of the north pole which has never been found and may never be." For the line, "We Sinais climb and know it not," the child wrote, "We sin as climb and know it not."

An attempt at quotation from "Gray's Elegy:"

"Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
Full many a pearl is hid beneath the sea,  
And many a man of noble mind has been  
Who had no chance to show what he could be."

A one-line sketch of Kipling's novel: "Light that failed—a blind man who went to war and was killed."

"Irving wrote several books on scenes about Tamney Hall."

"Shakespere made his reputation and money in the Globe Theater, New York City."

"Burn's greatest work—The Psalms."

"My favorite character in literature is Evangeline, by Shakespere."

"My favorite character in literature is Sir Longfellow,—his Psalm of Life and Vision of Sir Longfellow the best."

An explanation of the title "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table:" "Auto (about one's self), crat (a talk or conversation), signifies a talk about one's self. Hence the entire title means a talk about oneself at the breakfast table."

"Lincoln's name will be handed down from ancestor to ancestor."

The idea of death is thus concisely expressed: "We see him depart from the home of the mortal beings."

Another bit of terse English: "Rain was pouring its contents out upon earth."

"Benjamin Franklin was born in the beginning of the latter part of the 18th Century."

# The "Ideal" Christmas Gift

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*Ideal*

Waterman's  
*Ideal*



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## Waterman's Ideal Fountain Pen

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A young cynic writes, "Whittier is the only American author who had the rare fortune to remain unsophisticated—and unmarried."

A girl pupil wrote candidly, "My favorite book is the large cook book at home, and my favorite character is Charlotte Russe in that book."

A boy who had read Lowell's "Commemoration Ode" retained certain figures of speech and wrote: "When Lincoln was chosen President it was like changing earth on a plant. By bringing new earth from the west to fill the chair of the president in which the plant of the U. S. government grows." Shades of Elmwood! what will this boy come to?

A required reading was Ruskin's "Sesame and Lilies." An examination called for an essay based on the chapter, "The Queen's Gardens." One little chap who had evidently never read the book recalled the "Lilies" in the title and forthwith wrote an elaborate description of his mother's flower-gardens.

The teacher's requirement that her class write polite notes of regret was thus observed by Master Ryan: "Francis Ryan regrets with pleasure the kind invitation of his friend George Clay at his home from July 4, 1899, to Sept. 1, 1899. Sickness renders me from attending."

R. H. G. B.

**The Single  
Thought and  
Two Souls**

"SMOKING on the car!" exclaimed the disgusted woman, as Dennis Flaherty, with his short-stemmed pipe, took the seat beside her.

"Oi am!" rejoined Dennis, between long and determined puffs. "And av ye don't loike ut, go wan up froot. These sates is resairved fer smokhers."

"If you were my husband, I'd give you poison."

"Would ye, now?" Puff, puff. "Oi think, av ye wor me woife,"—puff, puff,—"Oi'd take ut."

Edward Nocton.

## A CHRISTMAS BEGGAR

*By Mary Livingston Burdick*

SWEET Gladys, when the Yule winds blew,  
Down alleys dark her light feet turned,  
And on the altar, Charity,  
The incense of her white lamp burned.

She was so calm, so fair, so pure,  
I almost feared to breathe her name,  
And, helpless, in Love's mazes groped  
Until a revelation came.

The Christmas stars shone in the sky;  
I sought the maid, and said, "Indeed,  
You are so good to beggars that  
I hope you will relieve one's need."



"Of course, I'll try. What would he like?"

(And then I used my deepest art)

"What does he wish the very most?"

Why, Gladys, dear, he wants—your heart!"

Her lashes fell; her color rose;

These murmured words my fears relieved:

"'Tis right to give on Christmas Day"—

And I my Christmas gift received.



**Mush and  
Milk with a  
Little Spice**

IN the historic Pennsylvania town of C——, not a great many years ago, lived a little coterie of old people whose memories went back to Revolutionary times. Their "mush-and-milk" parties were very popular with the young people, who loved to listen to the old-time stories,—enjoyed most of all the little disputes arising from impaired memories and the petty jealousies of old age.

Each old lady had her pet reminiscence and was not to be outdone by another, so when Aunt Huldah Callender told of having been led by George Washington to his pew in Christ Church, Philadelphia, Aunt Peggy McCaskey would at once follow the oft-repeated tale by her equally oft-repeated one of a kiss from Lafayette, enlarging on the circumstances attendant.

Aunt Huldah had adopted an orphan niece, Mary Nesbitt, and Aunt Peggy an orphan nephew, John Hyde. These young folks were the pride of their hearts, and were betrothed, to the joy of their respective relatives.

One day Aunt Huldah told for the first time the story of the hopeless love of Captain Mercier for her grandmother, who discovered too late that she loved him better than the rich old farmer to whom she had engaged herself.

Aunt Peggy opened wide, astonished eyes, and exclaimed shrilly, "Why, Huldah, that cannot be true, for Captain Mercier loved my grandmother, and remained a bachelor for her sake."

Instantly there was a scene of confusion; Aunt Huldah tried to faint, but, thinking better of it, called her frightened niece to her side, and in bitter tones ordered her "to give up John Hyde at once."

"But, Auntie," faltered the girl, "I love him, and he has done no harm."

John rushed towards her, when Aunt Peggy called him back, threatening to disinherit him if he ever spoke another word to Mary. Naturally, he answered, "I shall marry Mary, in spite of all," and a scene of wild disputing reigned.

The dear little old lady "who remembered Bishop White" raised her hands in protest. "My dears! my dears!" she cried, "do not demean yourselves by a quarrel. There is some mistake which can be explained, no doubt."

Slightly calmer, Aunt Huldah replied, "I can prove what I say by letters carefully preserved by my honored grandparent," whereupon she went out of the room. Returning, she brought a packet of letters tied with faded blue ribbon, from which, selecting a few, she passed them around for inspection. They were genuine love-letters, full of the extravagant expressions (and bad

*THE first step away from self-respect is carelessness in personal cleanliness. The first move in building up a proper pride in man, woman, or child, is a visit to the Bathtub. You can't be healthy, or pretty, or even good, unless you are clean.*

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# A BEAUTIFUL SKIN

can only be secured through nature's work.

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are made by cosmetics, balms, powders, and other injurious compounds. They put a coat over the already clogged pores of the skin and double the injury.

"Really Truly," as the children say, there is more good and less harm in **HAND SAPOLIO** than in any toilet soap on the market. Other soaps *chemically dissolve* the dirt—**HAND SAPOLIO** *removes* it. Other soaps either gloss over the pores of the skin or, by excess of alkali, absorb the healthful secretions which they contain—**HAND SAPOLIO** neither coats over the trouble, nor does it go down into the pores and dissolve their necessary oils. It opens the pores, liberates their activities, but works no chemical change in those delicate juices that go to make up the bloom and delicacy of a perfect complexion.

Those who use

# HAND SAPOLIO

need no cosmetics—nature, relieved, does its own perfect work.

There is nothing more to say—perhaps words would never convince you—but if our many years of reputation as manufacturers of a household soap do not give you confidence in our **HAND SAPOLIO**, one test alone remains—TRY A CAKE, and you will be convinced of its many merits.

ENOCH MORGAN'S SONS CO., NEW YORK.

spelling) of the day in which they were written, and were signed "Louis Mercier."

Aunt Peggy read them wonderingly—then an idea suddenly struck her, and she exclaimed, "But his name was Paul!"

Hereupon the old lady who had sat upon Major André's knee in early infancy cried out, "I remember! there were two Merciers—twin brothers."

Thus was oil poured on troubled waters, and John and Mary sent to the Major André old lady two mottoes to hang in her bedchamber; one read, "Blessed are the peacemakers," and the other, "Cursed are the fussmakers."

*L. B. Lardner.*

## YE CHRISTMAS FOLK

*By Edwin L. Sabin*

REGARD the gen'rous Christmas pa,  
Who to his loved ones says "ta-ta,"  
And, with a pillow abdomen  
And cotton-batten whiskers, then  
Essays the lighted candles—la!  
I would not be the Christmas pa!

The anxious, foot-sore Christmas wife,  
"Ne'er bothered so in all her life!"  
Her mind beset by "make" and "size,"  
By dressing-gowns, cigars, and ties,  
And with vague apprehension rife—  
I'm glad I'm not the Christmas wife!

Hurrah! the bubbling Christmas boy,  
Who probes about with eager joy,  
And pokes his nose in secret nooks,  
And smells out skates and games and books.  
What cunning tricks he doth employ!  
I'd love to be the Christmas boy!

Alas! th' unhappy Christmas clerk,  
Whose holidays are work, work, work;  
For when a sale has been arranged  
The things come back to be "exchanged."  
He must not swear, but smile and smirk—  
I'd hate to be the Christmas clerk.

Behold the gallant Christmas youth,  
Who lives on bread and cheese, forsooth,  
And pawns his watch to buy a pin  
The girl he covets thus to win  
(And rivals put to shame). In truth,  
I was, myself, the Christmas youth.

FOR  
**X-MAS**  
**Theatrical Playing**  
**Cards**

**Something Unique.**—These cards are of the best grade, and on the face of each card is an excellent likeness of some well-known actor or actress. The backs are handsomely finished in gold and blue. You get a pack of high-grade playing cards and 53 pictures of the best known and most popular theatrical people in the country, for the same price you would pay for an ordinary playing card of this grade, 50c. per pack.

**A Box of Craddock's** **FREE**  
**Medicated Blue Soap**

Send us the wrappers from three cakes of CRADDOCK'S MEDICATED BLUE SOAP, with 25c., and we will mail you a pack of *Theatrical Playing Cards*, postpaid.

Get the soap from your druggist, as we do not ship direct. If he does not have it in stock, send us his name and address and we will see that he is supplied.

CRADDOCK'S MEDICATED BLUE SOAP is a high-grade toilet soap, with curative properties never before incorporated in any soap.

For sale by dealers at 10c.  
 BOX OF THREE CAKES, 25c.

We guarantee it equal to any 25c. soap on the market, and will refund the purchase price if you are not satisfied.

**THE EUREKA SOAP CO.**  
**CINCINNATI, OHIO**



Hail! 'witching, crafty Christmas maid  
 Beneath the mistletoe arrayed,  
 Who, by her mien and woman's wit,  
 Makes every fellow think he's "it"—  
 Although he isn't! I'm afraid  
 I cannot be the Christmas maid!



An Error  
 in

Orthography

WHEN Rogerson came out of the north woods he told me a most interesting story. He had been up there prospecting for copper.

"Did you find the mine?" I asked.

"I would have found it," he replied, "if it had not been for the bear." That, at least, is how I understood him. And I heard the adventure itself, as follows:

"I was prospecting through a tremendously wild country," he said, "and was almost ready to give up, when I came to a steep hill on which I could see traces of the vein I sought. I jumped to the rock, but it was steeper than I thought, and I slid straight down it, thirty feet or more, tearing things badly and landing right on the bear.

"There wasn't any use monkeying around that precipice then, so I started as fast as I could go for the camp, the bear behind me. It was ten miles to the fishing settlement, but I got there at last, and was never gladder to get anywhere."

"And the bear?"

"Oh, that was still behind me. That was why I hurried."

It was a fine story, and as my reportorial imagination was in search just then of a foundation for a good yarn, I made the most of this. Our last edition came out with a thrilling narrative of my friend's pursuit by an enormous black bear, and his escape after ten miles of running through almost impenetrable underbrush. It was a fine story, and the city editor took occasion to say so. It was the next day that I met my friend again.

"That was a fine pipe you got up about me," he said.

"Pipe?" I demanded. "Why, you told me yourself about sliding down the rock on the bear, and how it followed you home."

My friend looked at me for a moment in amazement, and then he was seized by a spasm of mirth.

"Oh, so I did," he exclaimed. "So I did. But you spelled it wrong. I said b-a-r-e, not b-e-a-r."

*John Swain.*



A Double  
 Superlative

SOMETHING seemed to be amiss with the water of our well, and I sent for old Uncle Randall that he might go down and see what was the trouble. After removing the boxing from the

top, he lay flat on the ground and peered for some minutes down into the darkness.

When he arose to his feet he pushed back his battered straw hat, shook

Can anyone suppose that we would double the necessary cost of our brewing without a vital reason?

Would we spend so much on cleanliness? Would we cool the beer in plate glass rooms? Would we filter all the air that touches it? Would we age it for months in refrigerating rooms? Would we filter it? Would we sterilize every bottle after it is sealed?

Can anyone suppose that it is our good—rather than your good—that we serve by it?

*Schlitz*

We do it to attain absolute purity—to avoid the remotest possibility of germs—to make Schlitz Beer healthful—to escape the cause of biliousness; the lack of age and proper fermentation.

Why accept a common beer—brewed without any of these precautions—when Schlitz Beer costs no more?



Your dealer may prefer to furnish a beer that pays a little more profit; but does it pay you to permit it? Isn't pure beer—Schlitz Beer—worth asking for?

*Ask for the  
brewery bottling.*



his head slowly, and spoke with a conviction that disposed of any possible argument. "I can't go down in dis yere well no how in de worl', Miss Carrie," he said firmly. "Hit's too dangersome. De wall on yan side is a-bulgin' out jes ready to fall. I knowed a man oncet whut went down in a well percisely lak dis one, jes kase he felt bleegeter git out a little stick whut kep' a-ketchin' onter de bucket. An' jes 'bout time he ketched holt er de stick, de wall hit up an' caved in. Oom-o-o-h——"

The pause was more significant than even the long-drawn groan.

"Was he dead when they got him out?" I asked, vividly impressed.

"Dead! Goodniss, Miss Carrie, whut you ast me that fur? Dat nigger done quit bein' dead!"

*Florida C. Orr.*

### A PARADOX

*By George Hyde Preston*

I'LL flee from my besetting sin,  
I'll bar my house about;  
Then, when my sin comes knocking there,  
"My sin will find me out!"

### What Jane Suffered

A DEAR little boy, whose identity it is unnecessary to disclose, attended school last winter, and on an occasion when visitors were announced took part in the exercises given in their honor.

The programme consisted of recitations by the brighter children of the school, and among them this particular little boy was called on. He recited, in perfectly good faith, the following lines, which he had learned, or had caught from an indulgent nurse with a semi-poetical instinct:

"Jane ate cake, and Jane ate jelly,  
Jane went to bed with a pain in her——  
Now, don't get excited, don't be misled,  
For what Jane suffered was a pain in her head."

When the youngster told this to his entirely surprised and somewhat shocked parents, they asked him, "What did the teacher say?"

He replied: "She said nothing. She just turned around and looked out of the window, but the scholars and the visitors wanted me to say it again."

*J. H. R.*

### A Mourning Gown

AT a funeral recently, where the usual unwholesome custom of darkened rooms prevailed, the near relatives of the deceased had arisen to follow in silent procession the grief-stricken widow to the awaiting carriages. Folded up on a corner of the divan where the widow and eldest son had been sitting during the ceremony was a gorgeously hued slumber-robe of the type known as "crazy quilt." Thinking she had, in her grief, forgotten her wrap, a near-sighted male relative hastily crossed the

# SOMETHING GOOD FOR CHRISTMAS.

During the holiday season, when good cheer everywhere prevails, there is nothing nicer to have in the house than a little good whiskey, and besides, your physician will tell you it is excellent in many cases of sickness. But you must have good whiskey, pure whiskey. You don't want to drink poor whiskey yourself, much less offer it to your friends, while as a medicine, poor whiskey, adulterated whiskey, may do you decided harm.

**HAYNER WHISKEY** goes to you direct from our own distillery, with all its original richness and flavor, and carries a **UNITED STATES REGISTERED DISTILLER'S GUARANTEE** of **PURITY** and **AGE**. When you buy **HAYNER WHISKEY** you save the enormous profits of the dealers and have our guarantee that your money will be promptly refunded if you are not perfectly satisfied with the whiskey after trying it. Isn't that fair?

# HAYNER WHISKEY

## 4 FULL QUARTS \$3.20

**EXPRESS CHARGES PAID BY US.**

We will send you **FOUR FULL QUART BOTTLES** of **HAYNER'S SEVEN-YEAR-OLD RYE** for **\$3.20**, express charges paid by us. Try it and if you don't find it all right and as good as you ever used or can buy from anybody else at any price, send it back at our expense and the next mail will bring you your \$3.20. Could any offer be fairer? This offer is backed by a company with a capital of \$500,000.00, paid in full, and the proud reputation of 36 years of continuous success. We have over a quarter of a million satisfied customers, proving conclusively that our whiskey is all right and that we do exactly as we say. If you don't want four quarts yourself, get a friend to join you. Shipment made in a plain sealed case, no marks to show what's inside.

Orders for Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington or Wyoming must be on the basis of 4 Quarts for \$4.00 by **EXPRESS PREPAID** or 20 Quarts for \$16.00 by **FREIGHT PREPAID**.

**FREE** With each four quart order we will send free one gold-tipped whiskey glass and one corkscrew. If you wish to send an order to a friend, as a Christmas present, we will enclose with the shipment an elegant souvenir card, with both your names neatly printed thereon. Write our nearest office **NOW**.

**ESTABLISHED  
1866.**

**THE HAYNER DISTILLING COMPANY,**  
**DAYTON, OHIO. ST. LOUIS, MO. ST. PAUL, MINN.**

**DISTILLERY,  
TROY, OHIO.**



room, and with tender solicitude for the grieving woman carefully deposited it across her shoulders. The recipient quietly allowed it to fall to the floor, but her would-be cavalier solemnly picked it up and this time put it on with several admonishing pats to secure it on the unresisting shoulders. Once more did the widow discard her brilliant covering; but with patience undiminished he stood by, and, determined to see her warmly clad, persistently placed it around her again. Feeling that resistance was useless against such kind but misguided insistence, the poor woman, unaware of the unsuitable coloring of the shawl, but a victim of circumstances and the near-sighted relative, walked out to the carriage with a garment that quite dimmed the lustre and vari-colorings of Joseph's far-famed coat, and not till the carriage-door was closed was she aware of the nature of the garment she had worn before a wondering, gasping concourse of friends, who had not seen the incident which imposed it upon her.

*Eva C. Brooks.*

### IS IT I?

*By Warwick S. Price*

WHERE is the man who has not said  
At evening, when he went to bed,  
"I'll waken with the crowing cock,  
And get to work by six o'clock"?

Where is the man who, rather late,  
Crawls out of bed at half-past eight,  
That has not thought, with fond regard,  
"It's better not to work too hard"?

**Over to the  
Enemy**

"SUCH a disgraceness! Such a disgraceness!" moans Mr. Solomon Greenbaum, tearing at his patriarchal beard.

"Vat iss it?" inquires Mr. Levi Schoenkemp, with a sympathetic smile.

"My boy Ikey—he is der plack sheeps off der familys! Yes. Oh, oh, oh! He hass pranded us mit shames."

"Vat hass he dit?"

"Oh, it iss awful to tell. He hass choined out mit der fire-enchines gompany!"

*W. D. Nesbit.*

**Easily  
Disturbed**

THE wife of a minister in one of the Eastern cities was told one day by a servant that there was a young man downstairs who wanted to have a word with her. On entering the parlor she was greeted by a respectable-looking young man whose embarrassment was accounted for by the fact that he had called to engage the services of the

# Sick Made Well Weak Made Strong

**Marvellous Elixir of Life Discovered  
by Famous Doctor-Scientist that  
Cures Every Known Ailment.**

**Wonderful Cures Are Effected that  
Seem Like Miracles Performed—  
The Secret of Long Life of  
Olden Times Revived.**

**The Remedy is Free to All Who Send  
Name and Address.**



**DR. JAMES WILLIAM KIDD.**

After years of patient study, and delving into the dusty records of the past, as well as following modern experiments in the realms of medical science, Dr. James W. Kidd, 242 Baltes Block, Fort Wayne, Ind., makes the startling announcement that he has surely discovered the elixir of life. That he is able with the aid of a mysterious compound known only to himself, produced as a result of the years he has spent in searching for this precious life-giving boon, to cure any and every disease known to the human body. There is no doubt of the doctor's earnestness in making his claim, and the remarkable cures that he is daily effecting seems to bear him out very strongly. His theory which he advances is one of reason and based on sound experience in a medical practice of many years. It costs nothing to try his remarkable "Elixir of Life," as he calls it, for he sends it free to anyone who is a sufferer, in sufficient quantities to convince of its ability to cure, so there is absolutely no risk to run. Some of the cures cited are very remarkable, and but for reliable witnesses would hardly be cred-

ited. The lame have thrown away crutches and walked about after two or three trials of the remedy. The sick, given up by home doctors, have been restored to their families and friends in perfect health. Rheumatism, neuralgia, stomach, heart, liver, kidney, blood and skin diseases and bladder troubles disappear as by magic. Headaches, backaches, nervousness, fevers, consumption, coughs, colds, asthma, catarrh, bronchitis, and all affections of the throat, lungs, or any vital organs, are easily overcome in a space of time that is simply marvellous.

Partial paralysis, locomotor ataxia, dropsy, gout, scrofula, and piles are quickly and permanently removed. It purifies the entire system, blood and tissues, restores normal nerve power, circulation, and a state of perfect health is produced at once. To the doctor all systems are alike and equally affected by this great "Elixir of Life." Send for the remedy to-day. It is free to every sufferer. State what you want to be cured of and the sure remedy for it will be sent you free by return mail.

minister at the marriage altar, the prospective bridegroom being the young man himself.

"The girl at the door told me that the parson wa'n't to home," said the caller, "but I thought mebbe I could make the arrangements all right with you. It ain't goin' to be no great of a weddin', an' all there will be for him to do will be to come to number 86 Blank Street Wednesday night at eight o'clock. We'll be all ready, and the whole thing can be over with in five minutes, so I reckon likely he can come even if he has some other engagement."

The minister's wife, having in mind the fee that always fell to her portion when her husband performed a marriage ceremony, assured the young man that her husband would be present.

"Tell him not to fail on no account," said the anxious young caller as he rose to take his departure. "You see, it would kind o' mix things up if he didn't come. Of course, I wouldn't mind it so much, but *she* would be turribly disappointed."

J. L. H.

**Vicarious  
Restitution**

NOT long since a respectable colored preacher, who was noted for his ability to "cuss out" people from the pulpit, was hurling thunderbolts of invective against his congregation because of a great wave of lying and stealing that was sweeping over the city. Among other things he said:

"No longer'n las' night, someone come an' stole de las' two chickins dat me and mah ol' 'oman had. I b'lieves de thief is in dis house right now, an' I hereby countersigns him to evahlastin' punishment. De nigger dat stole dem chickins is a-gwineter burn fur it sho, you hyeah me! De 'cree has gone forth!"

Next morning a colored man with two fine hens came up to the preacher's door. He said,—

"Parson, hyeah's yo' chickins."

"No, sah," said the preacher, eying the chickens closely, "dese ain't mah chickens."

"I knows dey ain't perzactly yo'wn," explained the parishioner, "but dese is to tek de place of yo'wn. Yo' chickins wuz et up 'fo' de 'cree went forth. An' las' night atter I went to bed, my conshunce hurt me so tell I had to git up and go ovah to Marse Bob's house an' git two mo' chickins. Parson, do tek dese chickins, an' fur de Lawd's sake tek dat 'cree back too."

*Silas Xavier Floyd.*

**AN AVATAR OF YULÉ**

*By Edward W. Barnard*

SHE wore my violets. I thought,

They've 'witched her with their woodland wine,

As tremblingly, unsure and shy,

She laid a cold, gloved hand in mine.

**ED. PINAUD'S**  
EXQUISITE PARISIAN PERFUME  
**THEODORA**



A  
Bouquet  
in  
One Drop!

THIS delicate combination of blended flowers is very pleasing for the handkerchief and atomizer. Sold everywhere.

1 oz. bottle, 85c.  
2 " " \$1.25

Write for free blotters scented with this perfume to ED. PINAUD'S, Importation Office, 46 E. 14th St., N.Y.

**ED. PINAUD'S**  
**EAU DE QUININE**



**ED. PINAUD'S Eau de Quinine** is the best Hair Restorative known. It preserves the hair from parasitic attacks, tones up the hair bulbs, cleanses the scalp and positively removes dandruff.

**ED. PINAUD'S Eau de Quinine** is also a most excellent hair dressing. The sweet and refined odor which it leaves in the hair makes it a toilet luxury.

*Sold Everywhere.*

4oz. bottles, 50c.      8oz. bottles, \$1.00

AN ADAPTED FOOD for infants is a scientifically prepared cow's milk—just the right percentage of fats and proteids. For forty-five years Borden's Eagle Brand Condensed Milk has been the leading infant food of the world. Use it in tea and coffee.

CATARRH CAN BE CURED.—Catarrh is a kindred ailment of consumption, long considered incurable; and yet there is one remedy that will positively cure catarrh in any of its stages. For many years this remedy was used by the late Dr. Stevens, a widely noted authority on all diseases of the throat and lungs. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send free of charge to all sufferers from Catarrh, Asthma, Consumption, and nervous diseases this recipe in German, French, or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing, with stamp, naming this magazine, W. A. NOYES, 847 Powers Block, Rochester, N. Y.



*For Children While Cutting Their Teeth.*

**An Old and Well-Tried Remedy,**

**FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS.**

## MRS. WINSLOW'S SOOTHING SYRUP

has been used for over FIFTY YEARS by MILLIONS of MOTHERS for their CHILDREN WHILE TEETHING with PERFECT SUCCESS. IT SOOTHES THE CHILD, SOFTENS THE GUMS, ALLAYS ALL PAIN, CURES WIND COLIC, and is the best remedy for DIARRHOEA. Sold by all Druggists in every part of the world. Be sure and ask for **Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup**, and take no other kind.

**TWENTY-FIVE CENTS A BOTTLE.**

'Twas our betrothal! Had I dreamed,  
Or was love hid in love's alarms?  
I kissed her hand alone—she seemed  
Too fragile for a lover's arms.

When I came home in autumn, ill,  
Heart-heavy, wan as grew the year,  
I saw her first, impassive still,  
In something very white and sheer:  
So dreamily she welcomed me  
From Fever's gyves on torrid shores,  
I likened her despairingly  
To those pale poppies she adores.

But here, at last, this Christmas night,  
As genie of the children's tree,  
Her cheeks aglow with candle-light,  
A new and lovelier lass I see.  
With scarlet ribbons on her gown  
And holly berries in her hair,  
She wears, go up the world and down,  
All charms that make a woman fair!

## AT THE TELEPHONE

*By Edwin L. Sabin*

*She* (standing at the instrument and ringing).—

"Four-fifty-three. Four, fifty, three!

(Repeating last figure.) *Three!* One-two-three! Yes! Can't you hear?"

*Telephone* (spitefully).—"Buzz! Buzz! Br-r-r-r! Buzz!"

*She* (startled).—"Oh, gracious me!

What makes them ring right in one's ear!

(Catches at a voice.) Hello!"

*Telephone* (in her ear).—"Buzz! Br-r-r-r!"

*She* (irritated).—"This awful 'phone!

(Again hopeful.) Hello! Who's this? That you, Jeannette?

Hello! Hel-Lo!"

*Feminine voice* (interrupts).—"A good soup-bone——"

*Another feminine voice*.—"Write often——"

*Central* (sharply).—"Got them?"

*She*.—"No, not yet."

*Telephone* (in her ear).—"Br-r-r-r-r-r! Br-r-r-r-r-r-r!"

*She* (flinching, but holding her place).—"Hello! I want Miss Black.

That you? What? This is Esther Keyes,

Keyes, K-e—yes! Can't you get back

To-night——"

*Central* (sharply).—"Through?"

*She* (wildly).—"No, no! Keep out, please!

Hello! Oh, dear! They've cut us off!

(Rings like mad.) Br-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r!"

*Central*.—"Number?"

# MUSIC HATH CHARMS <sup>Which the</sup> EDISON PHONOGRAPH

## Reproduces Faithfully

NONE GENUINE  
WITHOUT  
THIS

TRADE

*Thomas A Edison*

MARK



### MR. EDISON'S LATEST INVENTIONS

### The MOULDED RECORD <sup>and the</sup> NEW REPRODUCER

duplicate the human voice in volume and clearness. Absolutely free from scratching; perfectly smooth and natural. The Moulded Records are "high speed," made of hard wax, freely and safely handled. With the New Recorder perfect records can be made at home. **NEW REPRODUCERS on all PHONOGRAPHS.** Phonographs in Nine Styles, \$10.00 to \$100.00. Records, 50c; \$5 per dozen.

NATIONAL PHONOGRAPH COMPANY, Orange, N. J.

N. Y. Office, 83 Chambers Street. Chicago Office, 144 Wabash Avenue. San Francisco Office, 933 Market Street.  
European Office, 32 Rempart St. George, Antwerp, Belgium.



*She*.— "Four-five-three."  
*Telephone* (in her ear).— "Buzz! Click!"  
*She* (thinking she has connection).—  
 "Hello! Hello!"  
*Heavy voice* (in professional tones).— "And how's the coff—"  
*She* (compassionately, while waiting).—  
 "I wonder who it is that's sick."  
 (Brightens up suddenly.) Hello! That you? Let's try again.  
 I said, can't you get back to-night—  
 What? Louder, please!"  
*Heavy voice* (interrupting).— "Two colored men—"  
*Telephone* (in her ear).— "Br-r-r-r! Br-r-r-r-r!"  
*Same voice*.— "I guess the fee's all right—"  
*She* (desperately).—"Hello! Is Miss Black there? Black! Black!"  
 She is? I merely want to know  
 If she can't manage to come back—" "  
*Person at the other end*.— "This here's the cemetery."  
*She* (aghast, hastily jabbing receiver on its hook).— "Oh!"

**Trouble for the Proof-Reader** "If you think that I am going to pay you a penny for this advertisement of mine in your measly old paper, you are mightily mistaken, my friend," said an irate business man as he slammed down a copy of the *Morning Reveille* on the counter in the business office of the paper.

"What is the matter with the advertisement?" asked the business manager of the paper as he came forward.

"I'd ask what is the matter, if I were you! What I wrote was 'A fresh invoice of dairy butter every day.' Will you just cast your eye on that ad. of mine and see what you have printed!"

The business manager "cast his eye" on the "ad." indicated and looked for a place of safety when he read,—

"A fresh invoice of hairy butter every day!"

M. W.

## XMAS

By Eliot Kays Stone

WHY Christmas is spelt X-mas

Is plain as plain can be—

It takes a mass of X's

To fill the X-mas tree.

A Query

("AMERICAN BEAUTY ROSES, long stems, twelve dollars per doz."  
 —Florist's catalogue.)

If length of "Beauty" stems impart

The heat of a lover's crush,

His depth of pocket and of heart,

Then why not send—the bush?

H. C. Wood.

A SUMMER FEAST OF FICTION

# LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

JULY

5170  
SUMMER NOVEL COMPLETE

## On the Road to Arcady

By Mabel Nelson Thurston

### SIX SHORT STORIES

By BEULAH MARIE DIX  
*"The Love of Denys de Vaudrencaeur"*

By FRANCIS WILLING WHARTON  
*"A Sovereign Remedy"*

By MATT CRIM  
*"Rev. Pilgreen's Wooing"*

By CAROLINE TICKNOR  
*"Antoine's Loves"*

By ELLA MIDDLETON TYBOUT  
*"At Fiddler's Bridge"*

By ANNULET ANDREWS  
*"Lady, Mortal, and Four Hundred"*

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

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PARIS, BRETAGNO'S, 37 AVENUE DE L'OPERA



# LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE

*Contents for July, 1902*

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# LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

AUGUST

NOVELETTE COMPLETE

## New Samaria

BY

Dr. S. WEIR MITCHELL



*ELEVEN SUMMER STORIES*

By Marie Van Vorst

Cyrus Townsend Brady

Joseph A. Altsheler

Caroline Lockhart

Francis Howard Williams

Bertrand Waugh

Elliott Flower

AND OTHERS

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# LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER

COMPLETE NOVEL

## A Bit of Human Nature

BY

ELLEN OLNEY KIRK



## FALL WORK IN GARDEN

By EBEN E. REXFORD



## Short Stories

### THE "WON'T GO HOME"

*By Josiah Flynt*

### THE FIFTH WHEEL

*By Ina Brevoort Roberts*

### THE HIDDEN MAN

*By Karl E. Harriman*

### A JUDGMENT ON THEM

*By Jennette Lee*

AND OTHERS

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# LIPPINCOTT'S

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

OCTOBER

NOVELETTE COMPLETE

## FRUIT <sup>OUT</sup> OF SEASON

By MARY MOSS



Short Stories

by

MARIE VAN VORST

CY WARMAN

CYRUS TOWNSEND BRADY

GEORGE HYDE PRESTON

ALFRED STODDART

CLINTON DANGERFIELD

AND

JOSIAH ALLEN'S WIFE



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# LIPPINCOTT'S

## MONTHLY MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER

FREDERIC REDDALE'S

Complete Novel

### THE OTHER MAN



A SLENDER SHEAF  
OF MEMORIES

OF ENGLISH AUTHORS AT FIRST HAND



EDGAR POE'S LAST NIGHT  
IN RICHMOND

By J. F. CARTER, M.D.



Seven Short Stories by

ALICE BROWN

CAROLINE LOCKHART

CHARLES MORRIS

ELIZABETH D. LEWIS

DOROTHY RICHARDSON

LUCY BAKER JEROME

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CHRISTMAS CHEER

# LIPPINCOTT'S

PUBLISHED BY  
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.  
715 N. 3RD ST. PHILADELPHIA

MONTHLY MAGAZINE

DECEMBER

MAUDE ROOSEVELT'S  
Complete Novel  
**THE PRICE OF FAME**

Short Stories

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By H. B. MARRIOTT WATSON

LADY DELIA

By THOMAS COBB

A VOLUNTARY EXILE

By JENNETTE LEE

CINDERELLA'S SISTERS

By E. AYRTON

THE LITTLEST BOY & SANTA CLAUS

By E. L. SABIN

DINNERS OF FIFTY YEARS AGO

By MRS. E. S. BLADEN

A MUSICAL GAME

By PHILIP H. GOEPP

J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.

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